

THE

GRAMOPHONE

OCTOBER 1957

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE

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OCT 19

DETROIT

a great LP event...

Menuhin

records the

BACH
unaccompanied
SONATAS



Nos. 1 and 2 ALP1512 Nos. 3 and 4 ALP1531

Nos. 5 and 6 ALP1532

Portrait by Stephens Orr, F.R.P.S.

REGD. TRADE MARK OF
THE GRAMOPHONE COMPANY LIMITED**"HIS MASTER'S VOICE"**

LONG PLAY 33½ R.P.M. RECORDS

Menuhin is playing these
 works at the Royal
 Festival Hall on Oct. 6
 and is also
 appearing in a Mozart
 Programme on Oct. 2



they're enthusiastic about

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October, 1957

The GRAMOPHONE

Advert 1



ROSSINI-RESPIGHI

DECCA
RECORDS

LXT 5341

LA BOUTIQUE FANTASQUE

Ballet

DUKAS: L'APPRENTI SORCIER

GEORG SOLTI

conducting

THE ISRAEL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

*The world famous ISRAEL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
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GEORG SOLTI

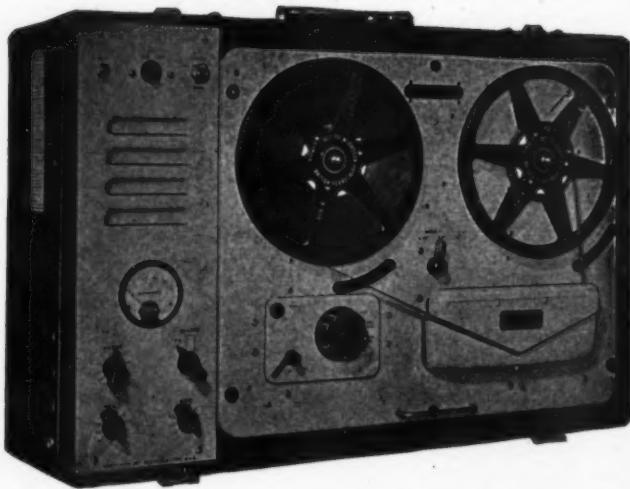
*in its first ffrr recording — a complete version of one
of the gayest ballets in the repertoire*



LXT 5341

THE DECCA RECORD COMPANY LTD 1-3 BRIXTON ROAD LONDON SW9

Vortexion



The above recorder uses a synchronous capstan motor and for use on 12 volt car battery a 50 c/s + 1 cycle 230V, 120W, power supply unit is available.

T.R.G.10 MINIATURE AMPLIFIER AND VERSATILE PRE-AMPLIFIER. A modern miniature amplifier, measuring only 4½ in. x 5 in. over front panel and projecting 10½ in. to the rear. Uses C core transformer material to obtain low external magnetic field and has less than 0.1% harmonic distortion at 10 watts output. The amplifier response is level 15 c/s to 50,000 c/s within 0.2 db. The 3-valve pre-amplifier will operate direct from recorder heads with correction networks for difficult tape speeds and switched inputs are provided for radio, microphone and gram. with correction for all recording characteristics.

"SUPER 50 WATT" AMPLIFIER. This heavy duty amplifier is available for long life under arduous conditions. The normal life being 5,000 hours without valve change.

HIGH QUALITY TAPE RECORDER

★ The total hum and noise at 7½ in. per second, 50-12,000 c.p.s. unweighted is better than 50 db.

★ The meter fitted for reading signal level will also read bias voltage to enable a level response to be obtained under all circumstances. A control is provided for bias adjustment to compensate low mains or ageing valves.

★ A lower bias lifts the treble response and increases distortion. A high bias attenuates the treble and reduces distortion. The normal setting is inscribed for each instrument.

★ The distortion of the recording amplifier under recording conditions is too low to be accurately measured and is negligible.

★ A heavy mumetal shielded microphone transformer is built in for 15-30 ohms balanced and screened line, and requires only 7 micro-volts approximately to fully load. This is equivalent to 20 ft. from a ribbon microphone and the cable may be extended 440 yds. without appreciable loss.

★ The 0.5 megohm input is fully loaded by 18 millivolts and is suitable for crystal P.U.'s, microphone or radio inputs.

★ A power plug is provided for a radio feeder unit, etc. variable bass and treble controls are fitted for control of the playback signal.

★ The power output is 4 watts heavily damped by negative feedback and an oval internal speaker is built in for monitoring purposes.

★ The playback amplifier may be used as a microphone or gramophone amplifier separately or whilst recording is being made.

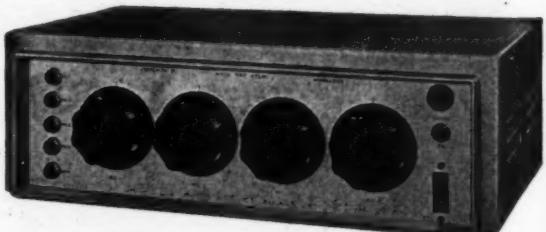
★ The unit may be left running on record or playback, even with 1,750 ft. reels, with the lid closed.

C.P.20A AMPLIFIER. This standard amplifier for extreme tropical use will operate from 230 V. A.C. mains or 12 V. car battery and give 15 W. output for a consumption of 5.5A. Inputs for 30Ω balanced microphones, M.I. P.U. and Cr. P.U.

FOUR CHANNEL ELECTRONIC MIXER

An Electronic Mixer for four 30-50Ω balanced line microphones or special to order. Normal output 0.5 V. on 20,000Ω but 1 mW., 600Ω balanced or unbalanced is available as an alternative.

The 3-CHANNEL MIXER and PEAK PROGRAMME METER is similar to the above but is fitted with a meter reading peak signals with 1 second decay time and calibrated in db's from zero level 1 mW., 600Ω to +12 and -20 balanced or unbalanced output by means of switch.



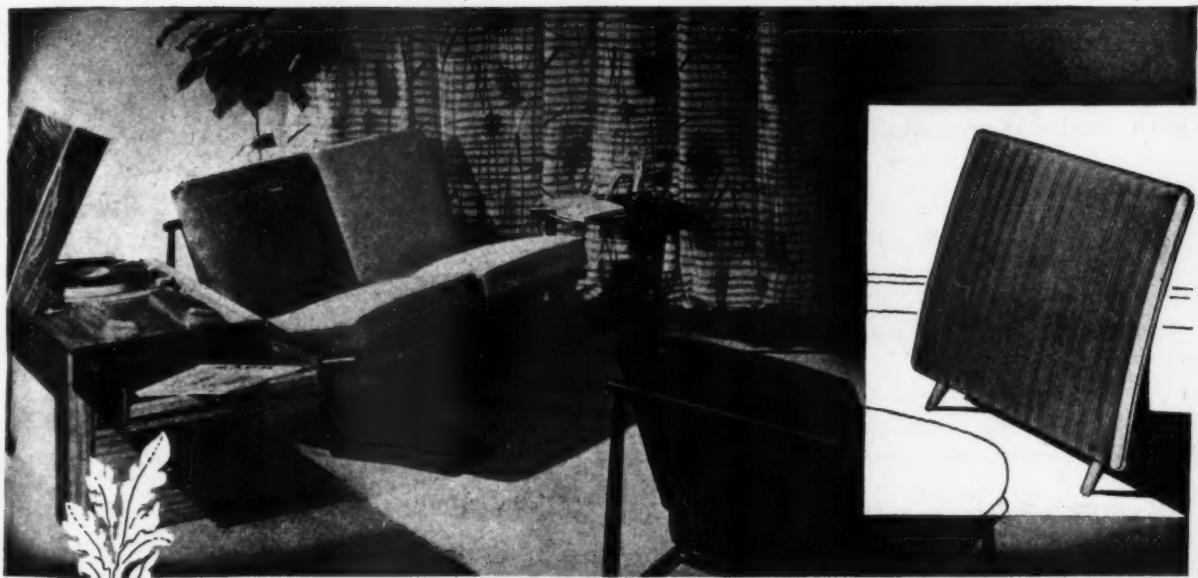
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Details will gladly be sent if you ask for our descriptive booklet.

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A NEW DEVELOPMENT BY JASON

Matching Equipment

J. 10 amplifier

with built-in pre-amplifier and tone control stages



This is a medium power amplifier for domestic use, especially in association with one of the series of Jason Matching Tuner units. A six-position switch selects input from a microphone, tape, radio, low output pick-up with 78/33 compensation and crystal pick-up. There are independent treble and bass controls; the output stage is of highly efficient conventional "ultra linear" design. At the full rated output of 10 watts (instantaneous peak—30 watts) distortion is 0.05% and the response level within ± 3 db from 25 to 20,000 c/s. Designed for shelf-mounting in conformity with other Jason Matching Equipment. Leaflet available on request.

AMPLIFIERS

AM/FM TUNERS

AM/SWITCHED FM
TUNERS

SWITCHED TUNERS

S. W. CONVERTORS

OUTPUT—10 watts (instantaneous peak—30w.)
at 15 ohms.

INPUT—for microphone, tape, radio, and pick-ups
with 78/33 compensation.

CONTROLS—Bass, ± 10 db; Treble, ± 10 db;
Volume-On/Off; Input Selector.

HOUSING—Shelf-mounting; matt black finish
and expanded mesh cover at rear, top and sides
on pedestal base. Illuminated scale. Recessed
copper-domed knobs.

£22 - 10 - 0

Matching Equipment

This series has been designed so that any other unit in it matches with the J. 10 amplifier. Polished copper escutcheon bars on matt black finish give a distinctive finish. Scales are illuminated and of similar styling. All models are on concealed pedestal bases and are for shelf mounting. Leaflets on request.

HARROGATE AUDIO FAIR, OCTOBER 25-27. TICKETS ON REQUEST

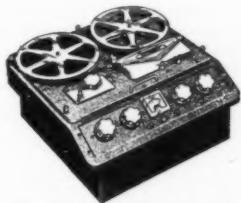
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Telephone : SPEedwell 7050

ON



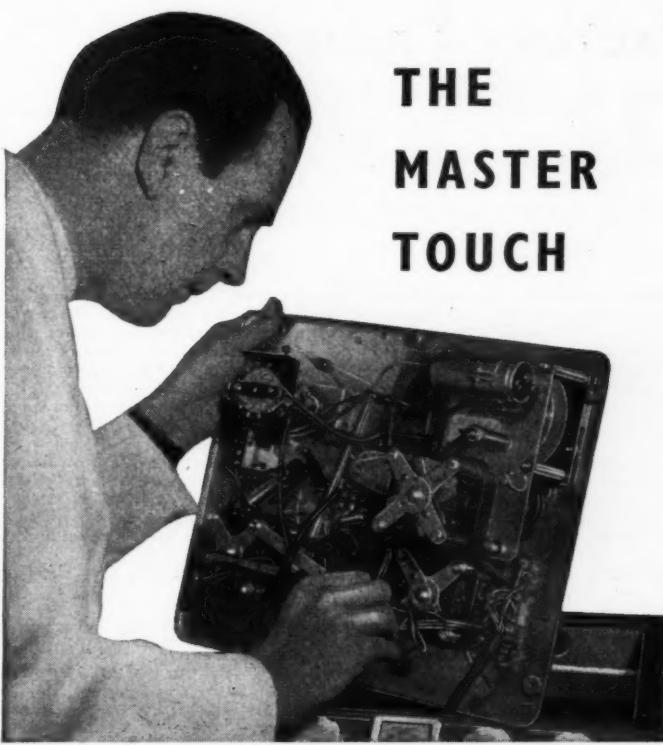
SERIES 3A In black portable case with detachable lid. Grey deck and amplifier panel with black controls.
 Model 3A/N, 3½ and 7½ i.p.s. ... 79 gns.
 Model 3A/NH, 7½ and 15 i.p.s. ... 86 gns.
 Including 7" reel of Ferrotape.



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 Model 66N, 3½ and 7½ i.p.s. ... 84 gns.
 Model 66NH, 7½ and 15 i.p.s. ... 98 gns.
 Including 8½" reel of Ferrotape.



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 Model 77, 3½ and 7½ i.p.s. for normal monaural recording and playback (with monitoring) and for reproduction of commercial stereo tapes ... 98 gns.
 Model 88, 7½ and 15 i.p.s. for full stereophonic recording and playback. Also for monaural full back recording/playback.
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IN THESE DAYS of impressive assembly lines—of ever-moving conveyor belts—of the advent of automation—it is well to remember that there are still products whose good name depends upon the traditional skill of the British craftsman.

Such a one is the Ferrograph—today freely acknowledged to be without equal in the field of magnetic tape recording.

Chosen by Government Departments, by the Services, by the B.B.C., by the G.P.O., by industry and research workers, by famous explorers and anthropologists whose sound recordings on tape are such an essential part of their work, by news commentators and those who travel the world to bring back recorded impressions, the Ferrograph owes much to those craftsmen who guard so zealously its unique reputation.

In the manufacture of a Ferrograph there is the closest control of every assembly operation. The tests to which every instrument is subjected are the most exacting that can be devised. Of course, such high standards of fidelity and performance cost money. But those who choose the Ferrograph are making a life-time purchase—they are the wise (and fortunate) ones to whom ultimate satisfaction and performance count so much more than initial cost.

The Incomparable **Ferrograph**

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Already the name of the Long Playing Record Library is well known among music lovers for providing a lending library service of an unparalleled standard throughout the British Isles. This service costs the borrower approximately 1/- per disc per week (including postage) and we operate a twenty-four hour, return of post, changing service. All the Library records are themselves purchaseable at reasonable second-hand prices—marked down according to the number of times they have been borrowed (unless brand new and unplayed). Alternatively a "factory fresh" copy can be supplied to order and when included in a Library parcel provides a post-free change of Library records also. When we add that the standard of condition of Library records is astonishingly high, the very large majority being in mint, or near mint, condition, it is easily understood why we get hundreds of letters annually congratulating us on our service. May we quote from just one, from M.A. of London, N.W.11. He says :

I doubt whether I have ever properly expressed my appreciation of the Library. It is a most remarkable institution in the complete but thoroughly pleasant efficiency of its service and in its splendid value for money. Indeed I cannot put a price on what I have gained from it. It has completely re-educated me musically, and is making it possible for me to acquaint my son as he grows up with a wealth of varied music unattainable in any other way. You are a unique educational force—education not unalloyed with pleasure !

Fuller details of our Library Service are available if you send us a large s.a.e. 2d.

THE LONG PLAYING RECORD LIBRARY CATALOGUE & HANDBOOK for 1957

Now available in a second edition, our famous Catalogue & Handbook has been posted to every part of the world. As a comprehensive guide to the best recordings of the Classical Repertoire it is in regular use, not only by private collectors, but by educational authorities, several European broadcasting organisations, and the trade in general. Besides listing virtually all the recommended Classical L/Ps issued in this country up until the Spring of this year (where possible in order of importance) there are also Sections on : The Care of Long Playing Records, The Reproduction of Long Playing Records, A Basis for a Collection (100 Recommended L/Ps) and, of course, full details of the Library. At only 3/- (post free) surely this publication is the best value available today in the gramophone world. Can we post YOU a copy ?

AND NOW a new service : for the Collector, for the High Fidelity enthusiast

FACTORY FRESH SALES SERVICE is a new service operated exclusively by The Long Playing Record Library

FFSS indicates that the record purchased is not only a brand new, guaranteed unplayed factory copy but that it has been obtained from the manufacturers by special order for the purchaser. Besides being unblemished, the disc is also as up to date a pressing as currently available in this country.

This is tremendously important when it is realised that many of the older L/Ps (especially Decca) are currently being re-cut from the master tapes by the manufacturers with marked improvement in reproduction.

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ADVICE We can supply the "best Recording" to order, if asked.

PACKING Unique and specially designed. All records polythene sleeved. No charge for postage and packing on any L/P, M/P, or two E/Ps sent within the British Isles (except Eire). No charge on export orders of £10 or over.

SPEED of DISPATCH 24-hour service for discs currently and immediately available from the Manufacturers.

GUARANTEE on all records providing any fault was inherent in the disc when it left here and has not subsequently been induced by faulty equipment or careless handling. Our decision is final in this matter.

STYLUS REPLACEMENT Sapphire or Diamond—by return of post in most cases.

EQUIPMENT & ACCESSORIES Our Reproduction Specialist, Mr. C. T. Salisbury, will be only too happy to advise personally on the best available within YOUR price range.

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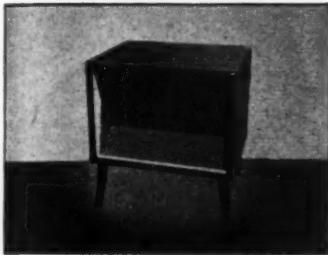
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• 10-Record Auto-Changer
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• High compliance turn-
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Three BBC programmes & Gram. 55 gns
Models without radio at 35 gns and 42 gns



1960 Portable
3 controls, 2 speakers.
New E·A·R PUSH-PULL AMPLIFIER
Non-auto 25 gns
23 gns



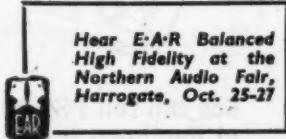
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Plays with lid closed.
Auto Model 18½ gns. 15 gns



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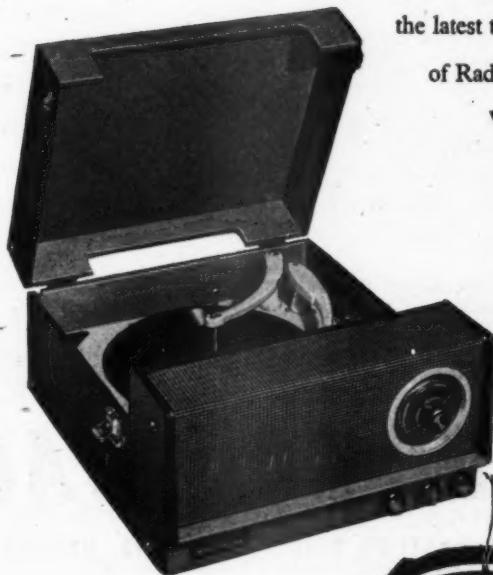
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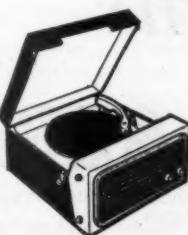
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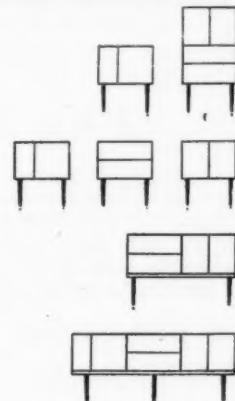
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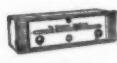
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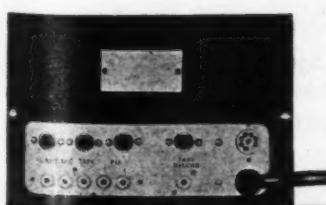
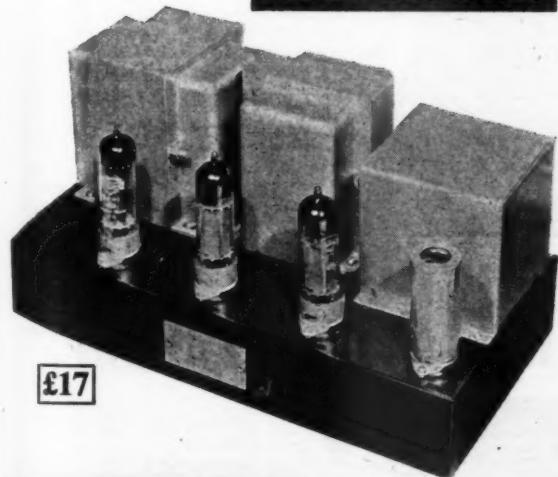
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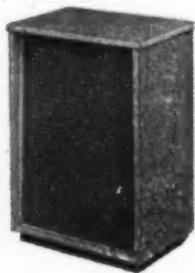
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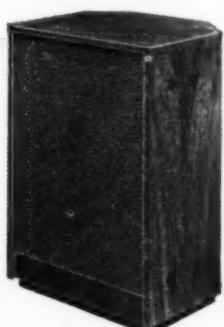
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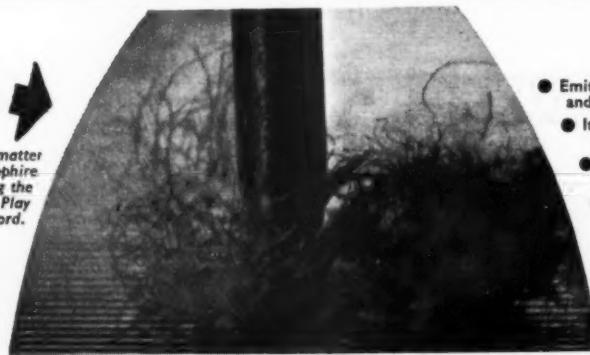
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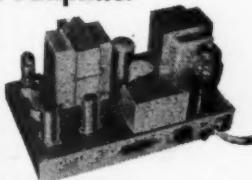
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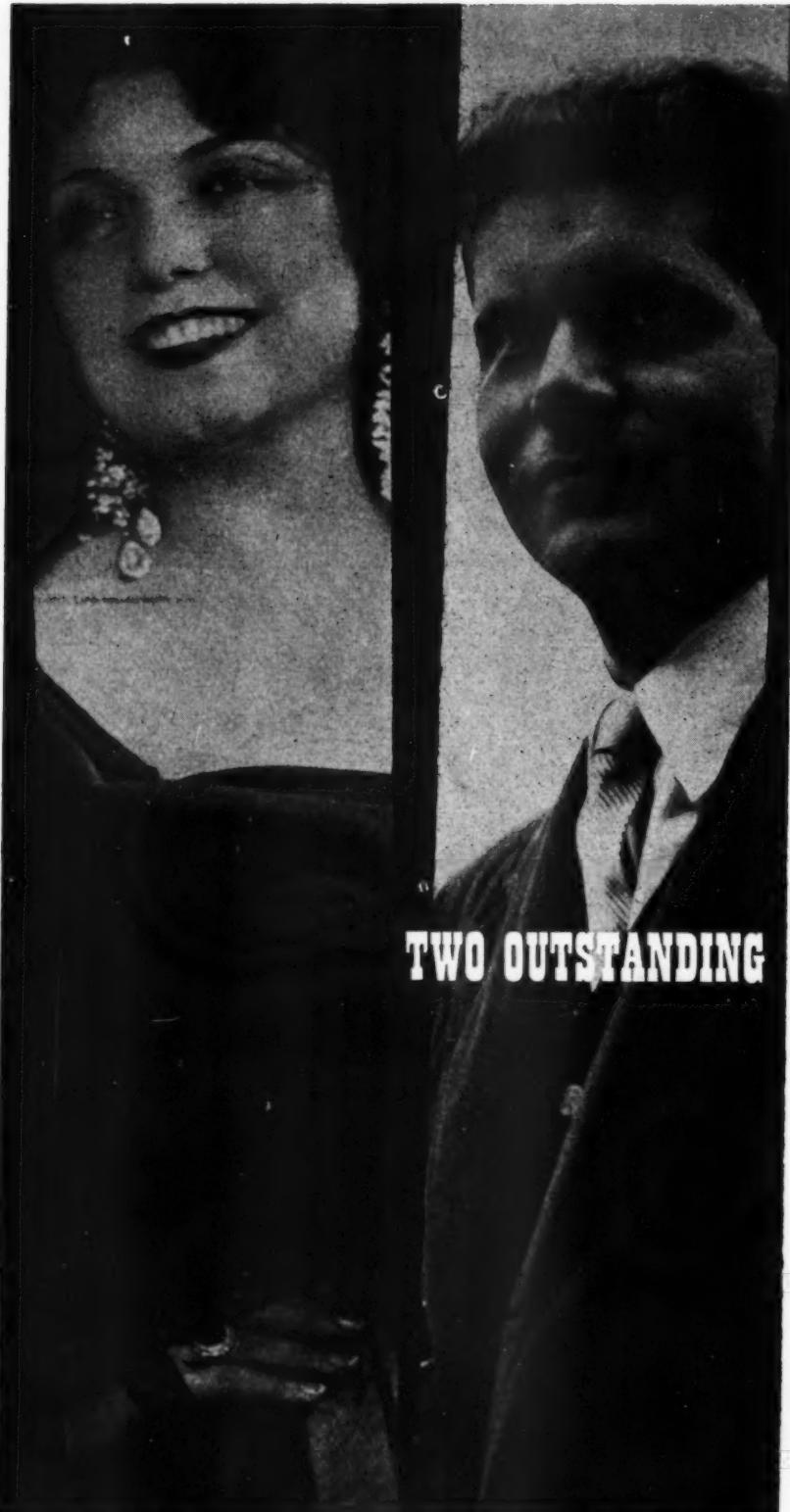
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THE GRAMOPHONE

OCTOBER, 1957 • VOL XXXV • No. 413

incorporating VOX THE RADIO CRITIC . BROADCAST REVIEW

Edited by SIR COMPTON MACKENZIE . CHRISTOPHER STONE London Editor CECIL POLLARD

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Editorial Office The Glade, Green Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex

Subscription Office 49 Ebrington Road, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex Telephone: WORDSWORTH 2010

Trade Office 11 Greek Street, London, W.1 Telephone: GERRARD 0650

EDITORIAL

Dennis Brain

The death of Dennis Brain, at the early age of thirty-six, is an irreparable loss to music. He loved speed: and, as our readers will have read, he was killed, on Sunday morning, September 1st, when travelling home in his car through the night from the Edinburgh Festival, at which he had been playing as soloist and at his regular desk with the Philharmonia Orchestra. He wanted to be certain of getting back to have breakfast at home with his family and was almost there when his car, getting into a skid on a damp road, crashed.

Like his famous father, Aubrey Brain, whose great skill and artistry he even surpassed, Dennis Brain used a French horn in preference to the German instrument and, perhaps unlike most horn players, never knew the meaning of nerves. His mastery of the entire compass, his delicacy in rapid staccato passages, were truly phenomenal, and his tone in lyrical passages was of unbelievable beauty. I did not have the privilege of knowing him well but, whenever we met, always found him a most engaging and modest personality. We feel sure our readers would like to join us in sending our deepest sympathy to Mrs. Dennis Brain and family.

We shall include, in our next issue, a tribute to this great artist.

Great Recordings of the Century

Further to a paragraph which appeared on page 403 of the April, 1957, issue we are glad to say that reviews of some of the first releases in the E.M.I. "Great Recordings of the Century" series are included in this issue under the heading of "Historical Records". Unfortunately, not all of the first release was available at the time of going to press and it is hoped that reviews of the following will appear next month: Beethoven Violin Sonatas, Nos. 1-4 (Kreisler and Rupp), Bach Concerti, Nos. 1, 4 and 5 (Fischer) and Bach 'Cello Suites (Casals).

Decca EP 45s

With the growing public interest in the extended play 45 r.p.m. disc it is interesting to note the release early this month of the first classical Decca EPs. Priced at 15s. 3½d.

(including 4s. 3½d. Purchase Tax) the series carries the prefix letters "CEP": the initial release consists of 16 discs which, with the exception of one by Gamba and the London Symphony Orchestra, and one by del Monaco of excerpts from *Lucia* and *Norma*, originate from Decca's complete opera recordings. With the exception of the *Norma* side of the del Monaco disc all the material has appeared previously on LP. Reviews of these records will appear next month under "Classical Reissues".

The History of Music in Sound (H.M.V. and O.U.P.)

Since the issue, in October, 1954, of Volumes V and VI of *The History of Music in Sound* (which were reviewed by L.S.) there has been silence, but that is now broken by the good news that not only will the long-awaited Volume I and also Volume VII be issued in mid-November simultaneously on 78's and LP, but that the five volumes previously issued on 78's have now been transferred to LP and will include some new details that musicologists have brought to light which necessitated alteration. These five volumes will remain available on 78's, but without, of course, the

alterations mentioned. We hope to include in our December number full reviews of the new volumes together with a résumé of the five volumes transferred to LP, which are also due to be issued in November.

It is intelligent planning to have this valuable series made purchasable in both forms. Educational institutions and music lovers with special interests will welcome the LP's, but the ordinary music lover still has a chance to acquire the individual items that especially appeal to him.

Volume I deals with *Ancient and Oriental Music* and no doubt the difficulty of assembling the material from so many different countries, China, Tibet, Bali, Japan, India, Islam, Israel, Iraq, etc., has caused the long delay in issuing the volume and the booklet to go with it.

It begins, promisingly, with "The strumming of an elderly gentleman in a state of refined intoxication"! and should prove a fascinating volume. Volume VII bears the title *The Symphonic Outlook* (1745-1790) and includes excerpts from operas by Gluck, Mozart, Dittersdorf, Grétry and Cimarosa—some of them never before recorded—church music by Michael Haydn and Mozart, and symphonies and chamber music by Boyce, Stamitz, Haydn, C. P. E. Bach, M. G. Monn, J. C. Bach, and Mozart. An exciting prospect.

ALEC ROBERTSON.

LETTER FROM AMERICA

By HAROLD C. SCHONBERG

AFTER a quiet summer begins the deluge. It has become the custom for American record companies to greet the end of the summer vacations with Niagara-like outpourings, and as these lines are being written (at the beginning of September) the record presses are working overtime. At least three companies—Angel, London and Victor—have come out with mammoth releases. None, however, has matched London in plenitude; the company has issued a quantity of discs in one month that in pre-war days would have taken care of the needs of a major organisation for an entire year. In one shipment come the following album sets: *Alceste*, with Flagstad;

Frau ohne Schatten; *Prince of the Pagodas*; the Molière-Lully *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*; Honegger's *Le Roi David*; all of Chopin's Mazurkas, played by Magalov; all the Beethoven 'cello music, with Nelsova and Balsam. But this is only the beginning. There are, in addition, twenty-six twelve-inch LP discs, among them two Campolis, two Flagstads, four Elmans and three Backhauses. To give an idea of the insane merchandising practices LP has spawned, London has released simultaneously the last two Brahms violin sonatas played by Elman and Ricci. Perhaps there is nothing like competition, but such an action would have been inconceivable only a few years ago.

Many of the London releases have already been available in England. These include *Alceste*, *Frau ohne Schatten* and *Prince of the Pagodas*. Each of these is certain to have a wide sale in America. The two Flagstad single discs are, at the point of writing, not yet released anywhere but in America. On one of the discs she sings Grieg's *Haugtussa* (what an appealing cycle) and four Sinding songs; the other is devoted to Wolf and Strauss. These are, like most Flagstad Lieder recitals, opulent and heavy. No real delicacy here; but the voice remains the marvel of our day. Admirers of Kathleen Ferrier were pleased about London's release of the Norwegian State Radio broadcast. The Elman discs consist of the two Brahms violin sonatas mentioned above; a Franck-Fauré coupling; a disc of early music, and one of encores. All of these are in the familiar Elman manner, rather slow, with the usual heavy vibrato and a nineteenth-century attitude. Backhaus plays Chopin (clearly but not too idiomatically), Bach (French Suite No. 5 and English Suite No. 6), and Brahms (Op. 118 and seven miscellaneous pieces). Like Flagstad, he too is an artist in the nature of a miracle. He is well past 70, but his rhythm and execution are those of a young man, and his technique is as strong as ever. He may not be the most emotional of pianists, but what authority and command! Magalov's Chopin is competent but not very imaginative, and the mazurkas need a more magical setting than he brings. Julius Katchen, in both of the Liszt piano concertos, makes one of his best records to date. The music needs the extroverted bravura he brings to it. Once in a while he runs wild, but at least he is erring in the right direction. The admirable Zara Nelsova, paired with Artur Balsam, presents a lyric, smoothly executed Beethoven, although Balsam, with his sharp, clear style, is not the ideal partner for her. *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* has a cast of French actors and musicians. The album is a delight, as much for Molière's literary masterpiece as for Lully's expert music.

Victor's big set is a five-disc affair devoted to all of the Beethoven piano concertos, with Artur Rubinstein and the Symphony of the Air conducted by Josef Krips. These are healthy and invigorating performances, played in the grand manner. Unlike most German pianists, who give the impression that they "own" the music, Rubinstein takes a remarkably free view toward the scores. But the music sounds entirely convincing as he plays it, and it has a wonderfully robust quality. On the same Victor list is Solomon's performance of the *Emperor* Concerto, a performance completely in contrast to Rubinstein's athleticism. Solomon is elegant and refined, and his finger work has a gentler quality than the brilliance of Rubinstein's. Both are worthy interpretations, with Rubinstein's encompassing the grandeur, Solomon's the introspection, of the concerto.

A two-disc *Rigoletto* set from Victor brings together Björling, Merrill, Peters, Tozzi and Rota, with the Rome Opera House Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Jonel Perlea.

This is, in effect, a Metropolitan Opera performance, for all of the principals except Rota as Maddalena are M.O.H. regulars. It is an entirely competent performance that they offer. Merrill's baritone is pure velvet. If he were a singing actor to match this type of pure vocalism he would be the world's greatest baritone. Björling is in good voice, Peters sings clearly, and young Tozzi is impressive. He has one of the finest bass voices to have emerged in many years. Perlea, who conducts with consideration for his singers, adds to the general effect by contributing some interesting noise from the podium.

Two old-time singers, Ponselle and Gigli, each has a Victor disc to themselves. These are not reissues but recently-made recordings. Gigli sings Italian songs, and makes a much better impression than in his disastrous Carnegie Hall recital album. Ponselle, who plays her own accompaniments in three songs, offers music by Delibes, Debussy, Tosti, Sadero and others. Her voice is almost a mezzo now, with a dark covering and an extraordinary variety of colour. She was, after all, one of the greatest Italian dramatic sopranos the world has ever heard. On a recent Camden reissue, devoted to recordings she made from 1924 to 1939, one gets a good idea of her voice in its prime.

Heifetz has a pair of discs. The Grieg G major Sonata and Bloch's long *Poème Mystique* are coupled on one disc. The other contains the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto, with Reiner and the Chicago Symphony. Heifetz has two current competitors in the Tchaikovsky, for Campoli has just recorded it on a London disc, Grumiaux on an Epic. The Campoli is too sweet and exaggerated for my taste. I admire its technical fluency but would not like to live with it for a long time. Heifetz is in brilliant form and his performance is breathtaking. Grumiaux plays with considerable dash, and is the first violinist I know who presents the last movement without a single cut. What's more, he gets the entire concerto on a single side, with Bruch's G minor on the other. Why couldn't Victor do this, especially since Heifetz takes some last-movement cuts? Grumiaux is accompanied by the Vienna Symphony under Bogo Lescovich.

Angel heads off with Puccini's *Bohème*. The leading singers in this two-disc album are Callas, di Stefano, Panerai and Moffo, with the orchestra and chorus of La Scala under Antonino Votto. I was not overly enraptured. Callas sings with her usual intelligence and temperament, and with her usual lovely vocalism in quiet passages; but as soon as she extends herself dynamically or in tessitura she develops an edge and a wobble; and these are not pleasant. Di Stefano is loud, occasionally exciting, and never very subtle. Since any *Bohème* stands or falls on its Mimi-Rodolfo, this is not the ultimate performance, or anything near it.

A disc of real importance from Angel is Stravinsky's *Perséphone*, sung by Nicolai Gedda, with Claude Nollier as narrator, and the Paris Conservatory Orchestra and

Paris University Chorus conducted by Cluytens. A work of genius, *Perséphone* also has a section for female chorus, beginning "Sur ce lit elle repose", which is one of the most beautiful things Stravinsky, or any other composer, has ever written. Giésekings, on two Angel discs, is heard in a large group of Grieg's *Lyric Pieces*, and I was enchanted with his playing here. He is in infinitely better form than he sounded on the Mendelssohn disc released a few months ago. Arrau, in Chopin's second book of Etudes, is all right when he can keep going; but he will make all kinds of senseless stops, holds and accentuations in the lyric etudes that ruins the effect of what his skilled fingers conceivably could convey. Angel has a charming disc of Elizabethan music sung by the English Singers; staggering performances of the two Strauss horn concertos, with Dennis Brain and the Philharmonia under Susskind, and serious, powerful (even ponderous) performances of Mozart's *Prague* and E flat (K.543) symphonies by Klemperer and the Philharmonia.

Space prevents an enumeration of many other current American releases. Those that should be mentioned, however, include Columbia's three-disc set of the Mozart string quintets, played by the Budapest Quartet and Walter Trampler. Here are the early K.174 in B flat and the five masterpieces from Mozart's maturity, all well played and recorded. Music has few greater treasures. Epic has a disc of the four Mozart flute quartets, with Barwahser and members of the Netherlands String Quartet, and also the first recording of Mendelssohn's powerful F minor Quartet (Op. 80), played by the Manoliu String Quartet (Mendelssohn's E minor Quartet is also on the disc). Capitol has a brilliant performance, by Nathan Milstein and the Pittsburgh Symphony under Steinberg, of the Glazunov Violin Concerto and also the best LP of the Dvořák A minor. A weird disc from Westminster was recorded in Russia and contains Chaikin's Accordion Concerto and Shishakov's Balalaika Concerto; both terrible pieces of music, but certainly novelties. Westminster also has two discs of Russian songs sung by Nadezhda Oboukhova, the possessor of a rich-sounding mezzo. Twenty years ago this must have been one of the world's outstanding voices, and it still is a gorgeous-sounding one.

A very unusual Camden release features Moriz Rosenthal in some previously unavailable material. Apparently Rosenthal had recorded these in 1939 and 1942 and never approved them. He plays Chopin's B minor Sonata, Tarantelle and *My Joys* (arranged by Liszt, of course), Handel's *Harmonious Blacksmith*, and one piece that he recorded in 1928, his own arrangement of the *Blue Danube* (this too has never been in the catalogues). It would be idle to pretend that the 1939-42 recordings are anything but the shadow of a great pianist, but there remain enough touches of imagination and style to show what he must have been in his prime; and the *Blue Danube* transcription is an exciting example of virtuosity in the grand manner.

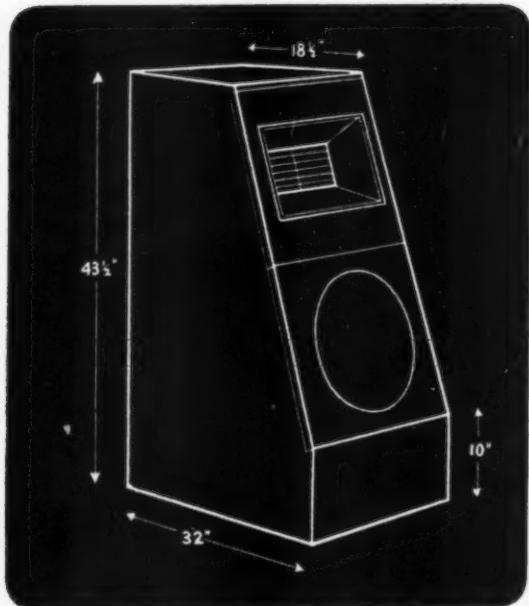
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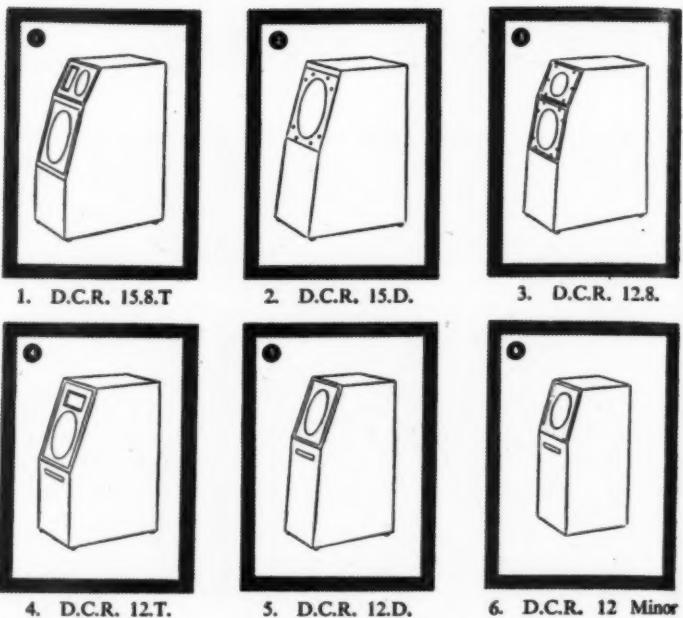
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QUARTERLY REVIEW

THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE VOICE

By DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

Toscanini and his Singers

CORRESPONDENTS in the August and September issues have raised the subject of Toscanini's choice of singers, with particular reference to Herva Nelli and Jan Peerce; and the appearance from R.C.A. of Toscanini's broadcast *Aida* performance (reviewed in the June issue by P. H.-W.) brings the whole curious problem again to the fore:

Mr. Pier Luigi Holt takes me severely to task for not adequately appreciating Mme. Nelli, of whom he writes in terms that would not seem extravagant if he were that lady's press agent. I gladly concede that a casual phrase of mine did not do full justice to her Alice Ford: this is, I think, her best recorded performance to date. She is good also in the Verdi Requiem, as I implied in the very same article to which Mr. Holt objects, where I described "Toscanini's Italian soloists" as being "altogether superior to their German opposites". But to lavish a string of superlatives on Mme. Nelli's Amelia, her Desdemona, and now her Aida, is surely to lose all sense of proportion. She possesses a voice of sterling quality, and each of these performances has distinct merits. But they are the merits of a gifted vocalist who has been thoroughly coached by a supreme conductor, rather than the independent creations of a conscious artist of the first rank. In much of *Ballo*, and in the first two acts of *Otello*, she often gives the impression of being overawed by the occasion: as we put it in *The Record Guide*, "again and again she fails to mould some well-loved phrase with the personal touch that we should have had from Muzio or Rethberg or Lotte Lehmann". In the last two acts of *Otello*, as in the Requiem and *Falstaff*, she overcomes her inhibitions and gives a very good—though still not a great—account of the music. An impression remains of something synthetic, or superimposed, in the artistic personality as presented on these records (I have never heard her in the flesh); and it is not altogether surprising that her stage career has been somewhat uncertain and intermittent. Surely even Mr. Holt will not claim that she occupies, or has ever occupied, a similar position to that of Zinka Milanov, or Renata Tebaldi, or Maria Callas, to name only three of her contemporaries. If it is too much to say that she owes her career to her association with Toscanini, it is certain that without that association her name would be less familiar than it is. She is a better artist than the baritone Giuseppe Valdengo, who sounds so impressive as Toscanini's Iago and Falstaff, and proved so curiously unimpressive when he appeared a few years ago at Glyndebourne; but, like him, she

seems to have no marked personality or style of her own.

In *Aida* there is something likeable about the simplicity of Mme. Nelli's approach to the heroine's music, but by no stretch of the imagination can she be called *grande classe*; who would buy separately her performances of either of the big arias? Alongside the Amneris of Eva Gustafson, it is true, she appears almost a star of international magnitude. Here one might echo Mr. Wi chnegradsky, and ask how it can be that great conductor can "take such care about the playing of the orchestra when the singing is often coarse or vulgar"—though Mme. Gustafson is in fact neither coarse nor vulgar; she is just hopelessly inadequate to the greatest mezzo role in the Italian repertory. It is an exaggeration however, to say, as Mr. Wischnegradsky does, that great singers have never broadcast with Toscanini. During the thirties, for instance, there were many mouth-watering occasions (alas, unrecorded) when the greatest contemporary singers collaborated in his N.B.C. concerts. In 1934 he did the Beethoven Mass with Rethberg, Onegin, Althouse and Pinza, and in the following year he repeated it with Rethberg, Telva, Martinelli and Pinza; a few years earlier he had "used" Rethberg, Matzenauer, Martinelli and Pinza for the Ninth Symphony, and the same team (but with Mario Chamlee instead of Martinelli) for the Verdi Requiem. As the old hymn used to say, "Oh that we were there!" Then there were those famous Salzburg opera performances with Stabile and Kipnis and Lotte Lehmann. But even in those days, I remember, he was prepared to throw out the glorious Friedrich Schorr from his *Meistersinger* cast of 1936, replacing him with the reliable but decidedly inferior Hans Hermann Nissen; and in later years he grew more and more content to work with singers who, though by no means the best available, were at least guaranteed to be docile and obedient.

How can we explain such things? It seems as though all the artistic virtues are never to be found in one man, even in so great a man as Toscanini; with advancing years he became more and more intent on his own inner vision of the work, to such a point that he could prefer a mediocre artist who would do exactly what he was told to a first-rate artist who would naturally have strong views of his own. The fact that he so seldom performed concertos during his latter years (and then most frequently with his son-in-law, Horowitz) points in the same direction: by that time he could not bear to be crossed by a strong artistic personality who might not see eye to eye with him on every detail of the music.

In spite of the famous rows in the old days when he was at the Metropolitan, things must have been rather different then; for instance, anyone who has read that wonderfully vivid book about Fremstad by Mary Watkins Cushing (called *The Rainbow Bridge*) will realise that it can never have been all give and no take when she and Toscanini collaborated in *Tristan*. Between these two dedicated artists there was, we are told, an almost mystical *rapprochement*; and Mrs. Cushing gives a wonderful account of a rehearsal of *Tristan* which reached such a pitch of intensity and exaltation as could no longer be borne. It is easy to say—and I am afraid it is true—that there are not many Fremstads or Rethbergs or Lehmanns around today; all the same, Toscanini could well have picked a stronger cast for his 1949 *Aida* than this, in which the only quite first-rate performance is the youthful and ringing Radames of Richard Tucker. Orchestrally, of course, everything is splendid. The phrases seem moulded from some durable substance, or graven in bronze; some of the orchestral interjections in the Judgement Scene of the last act are tremendous, like the crack of doom. The tempi are perfectly judged, and only very occasionally (as in the last bar of "O patria mia") is there a sensation of undue haste. In short, Verdi's powerful and torrid score is wonderfully realised; and if only all the singers were on Tucker's level one could recommend the set with confidence to all who have minds above "high fidelity". As it is, however, most Verdi-lovers will prefer the Milanov-Björling-Barbieri-Warren H.M.V. set, notwithstanding the comparatively tame conducting of Jonel Perlea.

Operatic Abridgements and Recitals

H.M.V.'s abridged *Ballo in Maschera* is not, as P. H.-W. surmised in his review last month, taken from a complete American recording, but was issued by Victor also in the identical single-disc form. I find this a superlative record: a souvenir of the Metropolitan Opera on one of its most splendid nights. Mitropoulos maintains a powerful drive and a dramatic intensity which might well be mistaken for the work of Toscanini himself; and the richness and warmth of the orchestral tone are captured by the superb recording. Jan Peerce, as readers will know, is not my favourite tenor, but I have never heard him to greater advantage than here, and he sounds far better (partly no doubt owing to the quality of the recording) than he did in the Toscanini set. Zinka Milanov is glorious almost throughout—and subtle too, in such details as the sudden pianissimo after the first word of the aria "Morrò, ma prima in grazia". At the end of this aria she omits the cadenza starting on the high C flat, and she gets past the high C in her Act 2 aria as fast as she decently can. These are signs that she now feels the strain of such taxing music; nevertheless, neither Herva Nelli nor any other contemporary soprano can offer us an Amelia so classically grand as this. Marian Anderson is the

Ulrica, her first and so far only role at the Metropolitan ; her inclusion in the cast was a belated triumph over race prejudice, but the New York reviewers commented sadly that the event had taken place some twenty years too late. I can well believe that in the huge theatre she was felt to lack volume and force, but on the record she sounds well enough, with a sense of style and a vocal colour entirely appropriate to the part of Verdi's sorceress. Warren, as usual, is strong and noble in tone, though not very refined in detail : for instance, he ought to fine his magnificent voice down more in the final bars of "Eri tu", where he has to sing a long passage as a duet with the solo flute.

The selection ends rather incongruously with the page Oscar's teasing solo, "Saper vorreste". Here Roberta Peters, with her bright, clear vocal quality, does pretty well ; but, as in all modern performances of the opera, the notion of teasing is dissipated by the song's being sung so "straight", without, for instance, the interpolated cadenza which was such a feature of the performances of Tetrazzini and Selma Kurz. Surely this is one place where an inserted cadenza has a decided dramatic point ? We need not insist (and, if we did, we should hardly get it !) on a 20-second-long trill *à la Kurz*—though that too must have made a dramatic effect, for while trilling she used to walk completely round the stage, maddeningly refusing to divulge the information required by the conspirators, while the trill went on and on ! Trill or no trill, something or other must surely be interposed before the final reprise of the melody, or the effect will be altogether lame—as though Oscar is just singing a bright little number to make the party go with a swing.

Roberta Peters has also had a recital of coloratura arias issued by R.C.A., and I put this record on with much interest. She has an appealing quality of tone, which sounds at its best in the very full version of the *Lucia di Lammermoor* Mad Scene. The voice is quite flexible, but not invariably in tune. All sustained notes develop a pronounced beat—like those of Callas, though on a smaller scale ; but then Miss Peters hasn't the art of a Callas to make us overlook such faults. For example, Callas always caresses her words as though she had written the libretto herself, while to Miss Peters (for instance, in Donizetti's "Quel guardo") they are evidently just so much necessary scaffolding for the notes. Her phrasing is sometimes eccentric ; and in the *Lakmé* Bell Song she takes the refrain at that hideous express-train speed popularised by Lily Pons (did any one try it at that rate before ?), which quite destroys the delicate charm of the number. In short, I cannot feel that Miss Peters is as yet much of an artist ; but she is certainly a rather attractive singer.

Conchita Supervia and Rossini

How much more than mere singing is required for a successful LP vocal recital is demonstrated by the reissue of all Conchita Supervia's Rossini recordings on a single

Parlophone LP. I adore this singer, as vital a personality as ever sang for the gramophone ; but I hope I am not unaware of her technical failings. P. H.-W. put it very well when he said that her coloratura singing lacked "academic perfection" but "had a fizzing, heady quality all its own" ; and years ago, just after her Covent Garden débüt, our valued old contributor, Mr. P. G. Hurst, contrasting her singing of the *Cenerentola* Rondo with the faultlessly smooth vocalisation of Guerrina Fabbri, wittily remarked that the break between Supervia's registers "reminded him of a train passing over points" (he was obviously referring to the famous two-octave downward run) but added that "with her irresistible personality it was all part of the fun". Just so ; and perhaps, after quoting two revered colleagues, I may go on to quote myself : "There is a Spanish roughness and vehemence about her florid singing which might have disconcerted the composer, but he could hardly have failed to delight in her delicious enunciation of the text, her mischievous exuberance, her sudden pathos, the innumerable touches of a witty and fascinating personality".

One qualification needs to be made. These Rossini records, if the serial prefixes can be believed, were made partly in Barcelona and partly in Milan ; and in both cases the deadness of the studio and the singer's proximity to the microphone give, now and then, a brassy blare to an individual note or phrase which was not at all evident in her actual stage performances. Indeed, Vittorio Gui, who initiated the famous Turin Rossini revivals with Mme Supervia, once told me (somewhat to my astonishment, I confess) that, strictly speaking, she had hardly enough volume for the big patriotic aria, "Pensa alla patria", in *L'Italiana in Algeri*. I thought this aria came across very well at Covent Garden in 1936 ; certainly, as recorded it sounds powerful enough for anyone. Full marks, by the way, to E.M.I. for including in the English LP both "Pensa alla patria" and the duet with Scattola from Act 1, "Ai capricci della sorte" ; both were inexcusably left out of the equivalent American Decca issue, and "Ai capricci" (one of Supervia's most captivating records) has never previously been available in England in any form. Congratulations, also, on correcting that hoary old blunder about the singer of Mustafa's role in the following duet, "Oh che muso" (it is, of course, Vincenzo Bettolini). But, while righting this error, the E.M.I. have committed a fresh one by assigning "Oh che muso", both on the label and on the sleeve, to Act 2 instead of Act 1. Moreover, the sleeve-note contrives to spell two famous nineteenth century Rossini singers wrong : Giorgi-Righetti as "Giorgi-Righetti" and Marietta Alboni as "Albini". Why cannot people get things really right ? The latter is a particularly heinous error, since the aspiring student already has to distinguish between the famous contralto Alboni and the equally famous soprano Albani, so that to be faced with an imaginary Albini may well strike him as the last straw !

Of course no leaflet of words is included, or available, with the Supervia LP. I make no excuse for reverting once more to this old complaint, for it is only by making nuisances of ourselves that we can ever get things put to rights. To obtain the full value from this masterly performance of "Ai capricci", the listener absolutely and beyond question needs to have in front of him the words, together with a close translation. The sleeve-note simply says : "Isabella and Taddeo quarrel about the situation, but finally make it up, deciding that they will pose as uncle and niece" ; which is true enough as far as it goes, but about as helpful in elucidating the finer points of the interpretation as a description of Hamlet's famous soliloquy—for the benefit, let us say, of an intelligent Yugoslav who knew no English but wanted to savour a Gielgud performance—in such terms as these : "Hamlet considers the possibility of suicide, but decides against it". Consider this tart little exchange of insults : *Isabella* : "Sciocco amante è un gran supplizio" ("A foolish lover is a great torment") ; *Taddeo* : "Donna scaltra è un precipizio" ("A sly woman is a disaster") ; *Isabella* : "Meglio un turco che un briccone" ("Better a Turk than a rogue !"). Words have never emerged more wittily from human lips than these two phrases from the mouth of the Conchita Supervia ; the listener who is not let into the secret is missing two-thirds of the fun.

Tiana Lemnitz and Der Rosenkavalier

I entirely agree with P. H.-W. about the excellence of the 45 EP Deutsche Grammophon disc containing the final pages of *Der Rosenkavalier*.

Tiana Lemnitz, who unfortunately never sang the Marschallin in England, sings exquisitely. She utters those famous words, "Ich weiss auch nix . . . gar nix" in such a way as to make us forget, for the moment, even Lotte Lehmann ; and of what other Marschallin, in life or on records, with the solitary exception of Barbara Kemp, has it been possible to say that ? What a pity that in the complete Nixa-Urania *Rosenkavalier* Mme Lemnitz should have sung, not the Marschallin, but Octavian—and that at a time when she was manifestly too old for the part and not in her best voice. More of her Marschallin has been preserved than appears here ; indeed, all the most important part. The recording, as originally issued in Germany and in America, is a 12-inch LP ; side 1 runs from the recitative preceding the famous Monologue ("Da geht er hin, der aufgeblas'ne, schlechte Kerl") to the end of Act 1 ; and side 2 runs from just after the exit of Baron Ochs ("Mein Gott, es war nicht mehr als eine Farce")—i.e., some five minutes earlier than the beginning of the EP excerpt, to the end of the opera. It makes a delightful record for those who do not feel like running to an entire *Rosenkavalier* set ; and it would be well worth issuing in this country.

I wish, by the way, we could have on LP or EP some worthy selections from Mme.

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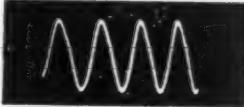


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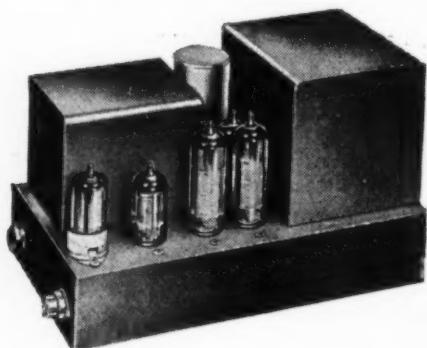
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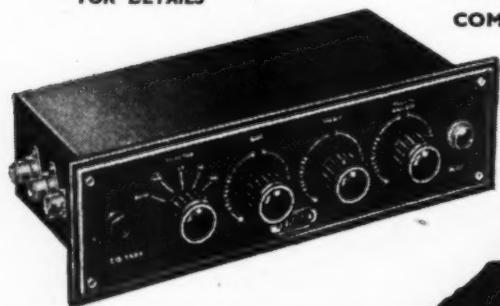
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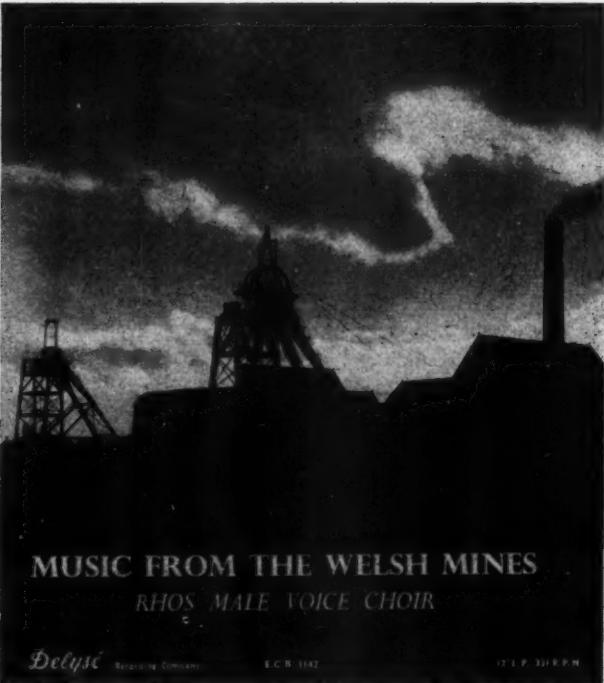
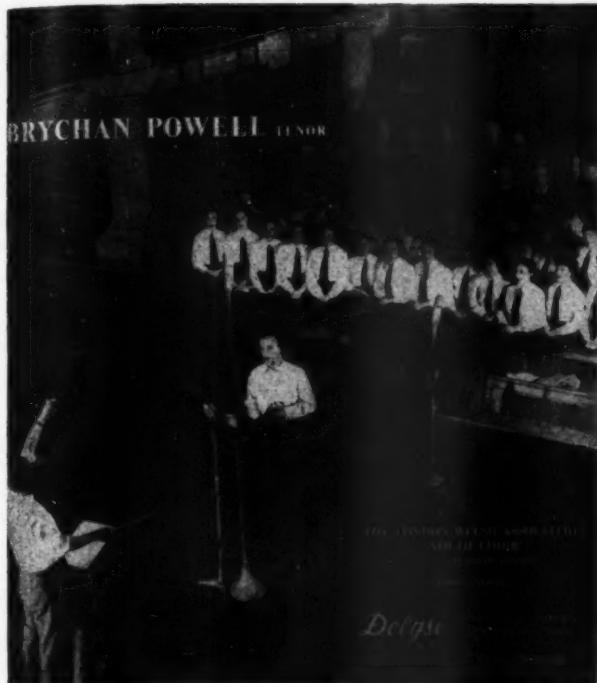
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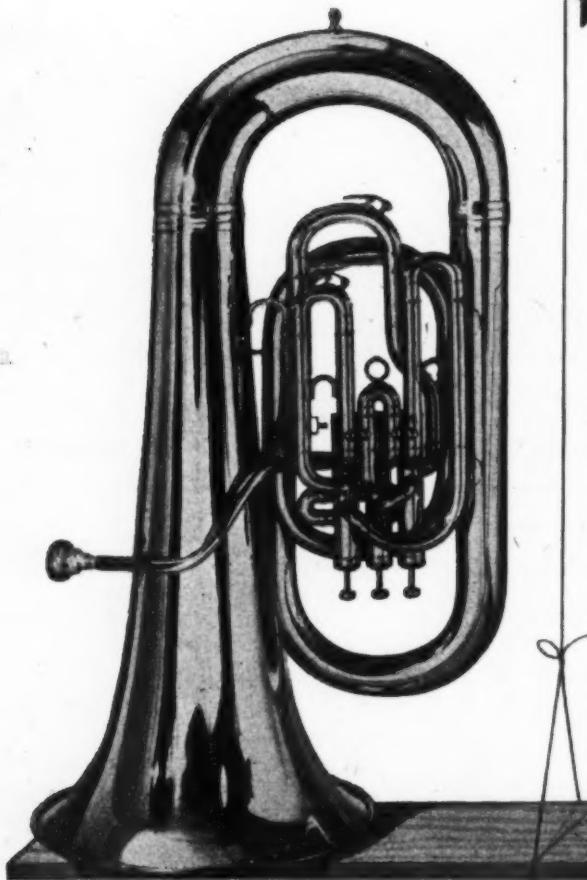
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Lennitz's lovely pre-war Polydor recordings, or from her somewhat later Electrolas, most of which were never issued here; the latter include no fewer than two different double-sided red-label versions of the entire "Leise, leise" scena from *Der Freischütz*, DB5549 and DB6802, which always look particularly tantalising when we encounter them in the pages of WERM. I believe there was also a complete recording, with Margarete Klose, of Elsa's Balcony Scene on four sides; but I am not sure if this was ever issued.

While we are talking of reissues, will not R.C.A. let us have some of the admirable, and admirably cheap, Camden series of

vocal recitals? I am thinking particularly of a record (Camden CAL335) devoted to Elisabeth Rethberg, which contains perfect transfers of the cream of this great singer's Victor repertoire; the two *Otello* solos, the two *Ballo in Maschera* solos, arias from *Il Rè Pastore*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Der fliegende Holländer*, Suppé's *Boccaccio* (delightful) and so forth. And all this, in fortunate America, for just under two dollars; or about fourteen shillings! Sir Compton Mackenzie has for decades been urging the companies to follow the lead of book publishers and issue cheap reprints; next time he reverts to the subject, he could hardly quote a example than this.

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ANALYTICAL NOTES AND FIRST REVIEWS

By

ROGER FISKE

MALCOLM MACDONALD
ALEC ROBERTSONTREVOR HARVEY : PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE
JEREMY NOBLE : ANDREW PORTER
LIONEL SALTER : DENIS STEVENS

ORCHESTRAL

BACH. Violin Concerto No. 1 in A minor, BWV1041.

MOZART. Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major, K.219, "Turkish".
Nathan Milstein (violin). Festival Orchestra conducted by Harry Blech. Capitol P8362 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Bach Violin Concerto : Heifetz, Los A. P.O., Wallenstein (6/55) BLP1070

Barchet, V.P.M., Davison (3/56) PL9150
Grumiaux, Guller Chmbr. (6/56) NBR6032
Stern, Philadelphia Ormandy (11/56) ABL3138

Erlin, Munich P.A., Redel (1/57) DTL93007

Mozart Violin Concerto : Heifetz, L.S.O., Sargent (4/54) ALP1124

Fournier, V. Op., Horvath (10/54) WLP5187
D. Oistrakh, Saxon St. Orch. (5/55) DG16101

Menuhin, Philb., Pritchard (10/55) ALP1281

Elman, N.S.O., Krips (10/55) LXT5078

Grumiaux, V.S.O., Paumgartner (3/56) ABL3006

Barchet, Stuttgart P.M., Reinhardt (4/57) PL10060

Schneiderhan, V.S.O., Leitner (6/57) DGM18134

Most record companies still seem to think that if the harpsichord in Bach is really heard, nobody but a few cranks will buy the disc. Putting my ear right into the loudspeaker I seem to hear the faint sound of the instrument here and there on this latest Bach issue: but it is never a real part of the orchestral sound and—this is the silliest thing of all—at those moments when it is vitally necessary to fill the gap between soloist and bass it is completely silent. Even if the general Bach public still won't buy a record if the harpsichord is audible (which I don't believe), the present policy of paying to have one there but keeping it to all intents and purposes inaudible would seem to be sheer waste of money. It must be understood that to record a Bach score without a harpsichord sound that balances the strings is exactly equal to recording a modern orchestra and putting the violas, say, where they can't be heard. And when it comes to a violin concerto with nothing but more strings for accompaniment, what a loss of colour.

That apart, Milstein plays with beautiful tone, smoothly but always rhythmically, and the Festival Orchestra (the London Mozart Players under an alias?) accompany buoyantly. The Mozart is good too, even if just here and there Milstein allows himself a touch of *portamento* between notes that is not ideal. It is hearty rather than

subtle Mozart but well done if you like it that way.

Grumiaux's disc of the Bach (a 10-inch with the E major on the reverse) still seems the most obviously sensible coupling and is well played all round. Others of the distinguished soloists above may surpass him in this or that, but he gives performances of sensibility, with well-chosen speeds, and the harpsichord, what's more, is quite often to be heard.

As to the Mozart, for fine playing, poise and style, I shall stick to Schneiderhan.

T.H.

BALAKIREV. "Islamey"—Oriental Fantasy (orch. Casella).

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV. Russian Easter Festival Overture, Op. 36. *Le Coq d'Or*—Suite. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Sir Eugene Goossens. H.M.V. ALP1490 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

These three Russian masterpieces are given rousing performances by Goossens and the Philharmonia, and they cover some forty years of the most brilliant period in the music of Russia. *Islamey* is the earliest (1869) and was originally written for piano, though this very year saw the production of such excellent orchestral scores as Borodin's First Symphony and Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*. It is odd that Balakirev never thought of orchestrating the piece, or that his friends and colleagues (who loved to rally round and finish or orchestrate each other's music) never did it for him. Casella's version is undoubtedly brilliant, but it lacks the true Russian timbre which could bring out all the eastern elements in this splendid souvenir of a holiday in the Caucasus. Nevertheless, the tinkle and glitter come through wonderfully in this performance.

Twenty years on, and Rimsky-Korsakov was directing the première of his *Russian Easter Festival* at St. Petersburg. This vivid tone-poem, which (to quote the composer's own words) describes "the transition from the gloomy and mysterious evening of Holy Saturday to the unbridled merry-making on Easter Sunday morning" is a test piece for orchestras as well as for hi-fi equipment. Can you really hear the harmonics of the two first violins at the *poco più sostenuto* after letter I ("Christ is risen")? Do bells, cymbals, triangles, and gong surge through the orchestral texture as they should? They are all on the record, without a doubt. The Philharmonia give a very fine reading of this score, with one exception: the passage for solo trombone (for which, if memory serves me correctly, Stokowski substituted a real, live Orthodox Russian priest in a post-war set of 78s). The

phrasing here is stiff, where there should be noble sonority and a true feeling for declamation. In spite of the 'cellos and basses marked down to *pp*, the trombone is clearly marked a *piena voce*. Did someone misinterpret *piena* as puny?

Le Coq d'Or has not appeared to sound his silvery note of warning for quite three-and-a-half years. In 1953/4 no less than four recordings appeared within a twelve-month, the last being Beecham's excellent version, which A.P. then praised as the best ever. The present recording is not better than Beecham's from the point of view of the interpretation and playing, though it has some advantages in its recording. The general orchestral balance is first-rate, except for a brief passage where Oboe II and Bass Clarinet get lost in bar 87 of the finale. Some high string passages in the first movement are not in tune as they should be. These are minor blemishes, however, and they do not detract from the value of the disc as a whole. D.S.

BARBER. Adagio for Strings, Op. 11. **ELGAR.** Introduction and Allegro for

Strings, Op. 47.

TCHAIKOVSKY. Serenade for Strings, Op. 48. Strings of the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch. RCA RB16025 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

The Boston strings are powerful, and often brilliant. They give here a good performance of the Tchaikovsky *Serenade*, with a good care on the part of everybody concerned for balance. Particularly effective is the finale, played with very considerable spirit. Also effective is the Samuel Barber *Adagio*; this is illuminated by an unusual quality of intensity in the string tone. Munch is not as expansive, in this piece, as perhaps the music will bear; but, allied to such string power, his reading is a very successful one.

The Elgar is not quite so happy; many of the composer's markings are exaggerated in a way that is often very necessary in less thoroughly marked music, but which is out of place here. The flow becomes, partly in consequence, an unnatural one; I hope I am not merely saying in reality that it is a different, an unexpected one (for some tempos and some turns of phrase certainly are unexpected).

In their unleashed moments, however, the Boston strings do indeed make a healthy sound in this as in the other pieces. They suffer, though, from a quality of recording which is clear enough but on the harsh side; this affects particularly the solo quartet in the Elgar, made to sound unduly gritty and unsympathetic.

M.M.

BEETHOVEN. Piano Concertos: No. 2 in B flat major, Op. 19; No. 4 in G major, Op. 58. Rudolf Serkin (piano). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Philips ABL3164 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

Coupled as above: Kempff, Berlin P.O., Kempen (5/57) DGM18110

These are businesslike versions of the concertos; orchestra and pianist alike address themselves to Beethoven with

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decision and conviction. This results in a very good performance indeed of the Second Concerto, in which the first movement is invested with considerable drama, the second with a splendid degree of spaciousness managing, yet, to stop short of the wearisome, and the third with substantial vivacity.

Something like the same attack, however, is made on the Fourth Concerto, which comes out of it rather less well; although the second and third movements are most admirably played, the vitally important first movement does lack some of its due serenity. Throughout both concertos Serkin scores a substantial point, in the easiest of all possible ways, by using Beethoven's own cadenzas.

The recording is in general rather good, but the piano tone is on the thin side, and the orchestral balance does give somewhat undue prominence to the solitary flautist (who unfortunately helps himself in any event towards this prominence by having a wavering tone). One astonishing thing happens: during a soft piano solo towards the end of the slow movement of the second Concerto two trombones, four studios away, suddenly give forth *fortissimo* on high G and E flat. It could be a pre-echo, if only there were something to originate it. It could, too, be a motor-horn, if only it were reasonable to suppose traffic drove about the studio passages!

It is, in any event, more curious than important; the performance it momentarily adorns is such a very good one. The same two concertos may be found coupled in a slightly better quality of recording on D.G.G. DGM18310; but on that disc the performance of Kempff and the Berlin Philharmonic, rather good in the Fourth Concerto, is distinctly unenterprising in the Second. And in both concertos Kempff plays odd and unsatisfactory cadenzas; Serkin, choosing Beethoven, chooses much better.

M.M.

BEETHOVEN. Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67.

SCHUBERT. Symphony No. 8 in B minor, "Unfinished". Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. Philips SBL5209. (12 in., 33s. 8½d.).

Coupled as above;

Boston S.O., Munch

(2/57) ALP1416

That's Szell, that was; the dynamic conductor has been giving many dynamic readings of the classics lately, and these latest two are certainly among them.

The Beethoven is beyond question a dynamic work, and it responds well indeed to the treatment. Many details, too, testify to a care on Szell's part for the smallest orchestral details: the slightest of pauses before a heavy accentuation, the lengthening in unorthodox places of broad phrases, the frequent adjustment of Beethoven's markings to allow to the tune a clear prominence over its accompaniment. And one detail has the compelling force of a revelation of gen us: in the bars leading up to the oboe cadenza of the first movement the oboe is allowed to emerge gradually from the texture with melodic prominence—its fas-

tidious commentary on the unholy fuss about nothing everybody else is making then seems at once to grow from the surrounding music, instead of being suddenly superimposed upon it. Beethoven may or may not have meant this; if he did not he certainly should have done.

The Schubert *Unfinished* is of course an altogether less dynamic work, and is correspondingly less successful. Both its movements seem a little hurried and inconsequential; though by no means unbearable so, and many of the solo passages are most agreeably handled.

They are not helped, however, by a somewhat brittle quality of recording. From this particular trial the Beethoven, again, emerges substantially the more unscathed; the nature of the music makes the total resulting sound, in this rather sharp quality, much more acceptable. To get these two symphonies at all for the price at which this record offers them is, it goes without saying, a bargain. Nevertheless the directly competitive H.M.V. disc, only a few shillings more expensive, does offer a noticeably fuller sound, and in the case of the Schubert a more sympathetic performance. M.M.

BEETHOVEN. Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125, "Choral". Clara Ebers (soprano), Gertrude Pitzinger (contralto), Walther Ludwig (tenor), Ferdinand Frantz (baritone), Bavarian Radio Chorus and Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. **Choral Fantasy in C minor, Op. 80.** Andor Foldes (piano), RIAS Kammerchor, Berlin. **Moter Choir, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by Fritz Lehmann. D.G.G. DGM18361-2 (two 12 in., 83s. 6d.).

Symphony No. 9:

Kleber	(10/58) LXT2725-6
Toscanini	(4/58) ALP1039-40
Scherchen	(10/58) WLP70208-1/2
Otterloo	(4/58) ABR1000-1
Furtwängler	(11/58) ALP1226-7
Karajan	(11/58) 38CX1891-2
Horenstein	(4/57) PL10000

Choral Fantasy:

Krauss	(11/58) PLE6480
Lehmann	(4/58) DGM18234

The issue of a Beethoven Ninth is a major production for any company, just as it is a major undertaking for the artists concerned, and if one finds oneself unable to recommend it, it is always with regret. On an occasion like this I try desperately to be enthusiastic. But try as I will, there are too many uncomfortable things about this latest Ninth for anything but disappointment.

Many of the drawbacks are in the recording, surprisingly for this company. The first two movements come off well enough, though the resonance is a little overmuch for the timpani rhythm of the Scherzo to be really clear—compare the Vox, for instance. But when we get to the side containing the slow movement I feel sure there is a change of level. I had listened to the first movements so that they were loud enough to be powerful and exciting: the opening strings of the slow movement then filled the room at a good *mf*. I am equally sure that they were not playing at anything like Beethoven's *mezza voce* direc-

tion but I cannot put the blame entirely on to the conductor.

So I had to turn it down. And I had to turn it up again to get anything of the cacophonous excitement of the start of the finale. Even then the D.G.G. acoustic did not make it very shattering.

Then we come to Beethoven's great theme on the cellos and basses. This isn't as sheerly smooth as it should be and I suspect that it is the acoustic again that makes it sound almost as if some of the basses are playing *tremolando*! Just after this, when it is all still very soft, someone drops a tambourine or hits a spoon on a teacup, or something similar. Whatever it is, the recording should have been stopped and a new start made.

The recording of the orchestra is not so good at some places in this movement, notably during the complex passage in the 6/8 March, while the chorus recording is nothing special. Here again level seems to alter. Surely, for instance, the men at *Seid umschlingen* are suddenly too near compared with the full chorus sound just before? And is not the baritone soloist too near at his very first entry compared with the level at which he eventually sinks into the quartet?

As to the performance itself, the first two movements are extremely well played and my only reservation about Jochum's reading is that at the end of the first movement he ignores Beethoven's *a tempo* presumably because he thinks it more effective to continue at a slower speed. The performances of other conductors encourage me to remain unconvinced on this point.

Later I find myself liking the performance less. The strings at the start of the slow movement are not, as I have said, quiet enough—compare the rapt *mezza voce* of Horenstein's performance. But there is more to it than mere loudness. Here and elsewhere, the full string playing of the finale theme, for example, they play with a rapturous romanticism that I find most unacceptable. Indeed, I don't think that this performance of the slow movement, perhaps the most truly moving of all slow movements, gets far inside the music.

The soloists are a good set and rank with any. Even so, that terribly difficult *poco adagio* part would have been more successful towards its end if no one had hurried. As to the chorus, it does not sing with the remarkable conviction to be heard on the Vox record nor does the acoustic help them in this.

I have so often written at length about the other recordings of this work that I do not want to go into it all again. I shall simply take the cheapest version, the Vox complete on one disc, and say that almost everyone of my complaints above is avoided on this remarkable production. Putting it on I again found myself carried along with the deepest satisfaction, alike by Horenstein's interpretation as by Vox's recording.

The *Choral Fantasy* suffers from none of the above faults and is a good performance, well recorded. It is not better nor worse than the Vox record, though different. Different mainly in the approach of the

celist, both playing finely, Foldes more poetically, Wührer more magisterially. The Berlin Philharmonic on this recoupled D.G.G. has some better touches, notably the delightful playing of the two oboes. However, I am content with either performance.

D.G.G. should, however, have given us some greater indication of the text of the choral part. They give a translation of Schiller's Ode for the Choral Symphony, which is well known, but only a hint as to what Bürgen's unknown poem is about. The Vox sleeve gives both German and English texts.

T.H.

BIZET. *L'Arlésienne*: Suites Nos. 1 and 2. Overture "Patrie", Op. 19. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, Bart., C.H. H.M.V. ALP1497 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Sir Thomas's legion of admirers have long loved him for what he can do with music such as this, for his wizardry in producing an enchanting performance of something we so often hear just hacked out, so that we find ourselves enchanted anew. He is here at the top of his form. The performances are entirely captivating, he gets his orchestra to play marvellously, and, as he usually seems to do, he gets the engineers to give their best too.

Listen to just the first two notes of the first side. Yes, I do mean just two notes! Any performance that starts off like this is clearly going to be worth listening to. Then, with what beautiful contrast he gets the woodwind to play the *cantabile* repeat of the music. (I refer to the Prelude of the first *L'Arlésienne* Suite.) Indeed, the march section of this piece, made boring in countless ordinary performances, is shown to be as good as anything else in the Suites.

I could go on with a long list of the delights that follow but this notice would then get far too long. It is impossible, however, not to mention the loving care with which the *Adagietto* is played, together with the excellent recording of the muted strings. Special praise, too, for the flautist in the *Menuet* of the second Suite and for the saxophone player throughout.

The same qualities pervade the playing of the overture *Patrie* and altogether both performances supersede all other recordings of either the Suites or the Overture.

And now, will Sir Thomas please do Bizet's Symphony? Not one of the versions available is anything like ideal. T.H.

BOCCHERINI. Symphony in A major. Symphony in C minor. Orchestra Alessandro Scarlatti conducted by Franco Caracciolo. Columbia 33CX1476 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Collectors with a genuine interest in the origins of symphonic style would do well to hear this record. The genial Boccherini is well represented in the long-playing classical record catalogue by his trios, quartets and quintets, and generally speaking his chamber music production outnumbers his orchestral ventures by ten to one. But these orchestral symphonies, whether of

the straightforward style or the fancier, concertante style, such as those here recorded for the first time, contain much that is fascinating as well as melodies and orchestral effects that never fail to please the ear. Indeed, it is surprising that nothing of the kind has previously been released in England—symphonies in B flat, C, and F are available on three American labels, and have been enthusiastically received.

The main problem that confronted early symphonists was how to stretch their melodic material and inventive ideas to the length of a self-contained movement. Boccherini solved it, at least in his early works, by a policy of wholesale repetition. Listen to the finale of the C minor symphony: there is an urgent, compelling phrase, it is re-stated. Then comes a phrase just half the length, and it too is repeated. A third phrase appears, and gets pretty well the same treatment. In other words the structure tends to be too foursquare, with the result that the listeners know what's coming, even on the first playing of the record. In his later works, Boccherini became more subtle in his phrase lengths (had he studied much Haydn?) and there are touches of Spain in his melodies and transition passages, echoing the time he spent in Madrid. The bridge passage in the first movement of the A major symphony is a case in point: a minor and a major chord, only a step apart; alternate in a manner that suggests the thrumming of a guitar.

Elsewhere there are touches of a courtly elegance that the composer must have adopted during his Berlin period. The warm-toned wind band in the trio of the C minor minuet is one example of this; it contrasts vividly with the Italianate flute solo in the corresponding section of the A major symphony, whose minuet stands second in the scheme of things. Throughout the middle movements, the concertante element is to the fore. Sometimes an oboe, a flute, or a violin (not very well played, to my mind, unless the descending chromatic scales were deliberately fingered in eighteenth-century style) sometimes oboe and bassoon in octaves, or a pair of horns—these are definite indications of a strong throw-back to the era of the *concerto grosso*, especially of the Vivaldi type.

If only Boccherini has possessed the ability to develop his lovely melodies, his place in history would have been entirely different. Stanley Sadie's recent radio series of chamber works by Boccherini have shown convincingly how near he came, at times, to being a great composer, and if further corroboration is needed, you have only to play the opening bars of the C minor symphony. Here is high tragedy in the true C minor tradition, with violins dipping downward over the minor triad to meet a rising bass line in undeniably pathetic intensity. But what happens? Soon the old transitional formulae which Wagner characterised as "broken crockery" are popping away on all four cylinders, and the promise of something rich and rare is a thing of the past. Of course, when the restatement comes along, we feel fine

again, and compliment Boccherini on a brilliant musical idea. As Paul Henry Lang has said, "his lyricism was too delicate and could not rise to the heroic power that is so essential in a symphony". Nevertheless, without Boccherini, the classical symphonists would have lacked a genuinely melodic genius in their early days, and the concert world would have been that much the poorer.

Caracciolo and his players seem to have an affectionate regard for this music, and the playing is (with one or two small exceptions) really first class. For those who want something old, yet something new, this disc will not disappoint. D.S.

BRUCKNER. Symphony No. 4 in E flat, "Romantic". Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. Capitol P8352 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

V.S.O., Klemperer (11/53) (7/54) PL6930 Netherlands Radio P.O., Kempen (11/54) LGX6626-7 (6/55) 33CX1274-5 V.P.O., Knappertsbusch (9/55) LXT5065-6

There is no keeping up with the texts of the Bruckner symphonies. Smart people now have the pale blue miniature scores—but even these, I understand, tend to be out of date almost before the ink is dry on them. Probably only Mr. Hans Keller could tell us now whether the cymbals should clash, or not, at bar 76 of the Finale of this Fourth Symphony. (They do, on this recording.) I have the grey-covered Brucknerverlag score, edited by Robert Haas and called *Urfassung* (this is used by Klemperer and Van Kempen in their recordings), and also the Eulenburg miniature score, which is Hans Redlich's edition of the Löwe-Schalk recension used by Richter and Mahler, and on records by Matacic and Knappertsbusch. In the new Capitol, Steinberg also uses this text, except, I think, at bars 151-162 of the Scherzo, where he seems to have suppressed the flute part. This is a shorter version: 35 bars less in the Finale, and a much-condensed reprise of the Scherzo. Capitol, unlike Columbia and Decca, fit the work economically on to two sides; but the conductor has made a further considerable cut of his own in the slow movement, from bar 127 to bar 190. This is scarcely acceptable.

In a long review in September, 1955, I compared the four previous recordings of this Symphony—and need not go into all that again—and also discussed the differences between the two texts. Further playings of the work have confirmed my definite preference for the *Urfassung*. Löwe and Schalk spattered the work with changes of tempo: Steinberg obeys them all, and even introduces some extra ones of his own. There is something unpleasant about the impatient way he rushes the first movement home, by speeding up at bar 490 (L. & S. dropped in a *Beliebend* here; the *Urfassung* has no indication of speed change). In the slow movement the slackening of pace at letter C (*Etwas langsamer* in L. & S., no speed change in U.) is an intrusion—though it must be added that the Pittsburgh violas play their

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No. 2
In E minor (P.139)

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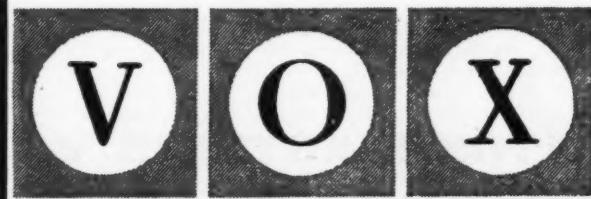
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RECORD NEWS, Sept., 1957. THOMAS BEDWELL

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subsequent melody with great expressiveness and beauty, and that the tone of the pizzicato accompanying strings is lovely. Indeed it is throughout a warm, deeply felt performance, most beautifully executed, and extremely well recorded.

Occasionally, in his cherishment of counter-melodies, Steinberg allows the main one to be obscured (e.g. in the first movement, bars 377-400, where the horn's "motto" hardly sounds through the 'cellos' tune); and I think that the timpani are perhaps too loud at the end of the slow movement. But for practical purposes I should say that those who are indifferent to the text used, who do not mind a flute instead of an oboe in the melody of the Trio, who do not resent the constant touching-up of Bruckner's timbres as well as his tempos, and who are not upset by the cut in the slow movement, will find themselves well served by the new Capitol; while those who insist on the *Urfassung* will make for the less well recorded but still serviceable old Vox under Klemperer.

A.P.

BRUCH. Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26.

LALO. Symphonie Espagnole in D minor, Op. 21. Isaac Stern (violin), Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Philips ABL3168 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

Bruch Violin Concerto :

Campoli, N.S.O., Kisch (9/51) LXT2506 or (12/54) LXT2004
Varga, Philh., Susskind (3/54) 33CX1017
Heifetz, L.S.O., Sargent (4/54) ALP1124
Milstein, Pittsburgh S.O., Steinberg (12/54) CTL7056
Francescatti, N.Y.S.O., Mitropoulos (12/54) ABR4011
D. Oistrakh, L.S.O., Matacic (9/55) 33CX1298
Elman, I.P.O., Boult (10/56) LXT5222
Gittis, V.P.M., Horenstein (11/56) PL1060
Ricci, L.S.O., Gamba (8/57) LXT5234
Schneiderhan, Bamberg S.O., Lehmann (8/57) DGM18036

Symphonie Espagnole :

Campoli, I.P.O., Beliung (7/53) LXT2801
Heifetz, R.C.A. S.O., Steinberg (10/58) RI.P1029
D. Oistrakh, Philh., Martinson (8/58) 33CX1246
Grumiaux, Lamoureux, Fourquet (11/58) ABL3126
Gimpel, Munich P.O., Rieger (8/57) DGM19071

This is without doubt a record of wonderful value, not only in the quality of the playing to be heard but also for the sheer amount of music to enjoy—it is the only disc to get all five movements of the Lalo on to one side, some other issues even spreading the work over both sides. (True, there is a cut in the last movement but it is only a short one). One often has to say that economy is not worth it: save a few more shillings and get the best performance. The best Lalo performance is still that by Gimpel, I think, but there is not much in it and I certainly cannot say that Gimpel is twice as good as Stern, which is exactly how much more the D.G.G. disc costs!

However, let's consider this new record on its own for the moment. Superb performances of both works, the Bruch filled with the romanticism it needs, the Lalo full of sparkle, charm and virtuosity. I have only two complaints. The first is that the Bruch isn't recorded quite complete. I can imagine Philips going to the telephone to protest when they read that! But the work starts with two bars of timpani roll,

of which something slightly less than one is to be heard on my pressing. It sounds very perfunctory.

The other complaint is of balance between soloist, playing right in your very room, and orchestra, playing away on a concert hall platform. Perhaps this is not so serious in these two works, both of them pre-eminently of the solo virtuoso kind, but give me, for one, more woodwind in a great many passages. That apart, the sound is vivid and faithful to a very high degree.

This is certainly a recommended disc, in fact, and if the coupling, a sensible one, suits you, I am sure you will enjoy it tremendously. But there are so many other versions of both these works that perhaps the time has come to give a note on each for general guidance. (I add what else is on each record in brackets.)

The Campoli Bruch (Mendelssohn) orchestral sound does sound comparatively dim, even on the later pressing, but if I already owned it I would probably not change, so well is it played—more sheerly poetical than Stern.

Varga (Mozart No. 1) suffers from an ungrateful violin tone, as recorded. Heifetz (Mozart No. 5) gives a lovely performance and this is another I would hesitate to change, even though this is another recording that does not now sound so well. Francescatti (a 10-inch, with a Wieniawski Souvenir) does the work extremely well and is himself well recorded but the orchestra is not handled so successfully.

Oistrakh (Prokofiev No. 1) gives a fine and admirably recorded performance (what a very deliberate speed for the first movement, by the way). Elman (Wieniawski No. 2) and Gittis (Sibelius) are the two I would definitely rule out. Elman's performance is unassured and unconvincing, while Gittis is unimaginative and hard in tone.

Ricci (Mendelssohn) is really wonderful. Both he and the orchestra produce a most grateful sound and the recording scores over the new Stern by being really well balanced between soloist and orchestra. Schneiderhan (Tchaikovsky's Romeo and Juliet, of all odd couplings) plays with less truly romantic tone and approach, while the recording is a bit woolly.

As to earlier records of the Symphonie Espagnole, the same comment applies to Campoli's record as to his Bruch—and the work is spread over two whole sides. Heifetz is on two sides of a 10-inch but omits the 3rd movement: likewise, the same comment as to performance and sound. The Oistrakh is complete but takes two whole sides and he doesn't captivate as the best of the others do. Grumiaux, like Heifetz, omits the 3rd movement but the rest is at least got on to one side. Good, if not really outstanding, performance and recording, backed by Ravel's Tzigane and Chausson's Poème.

Gimpel does take two whole sides but for seductive fiddling, with a wonderful range of tone and dynamics, for admirable accompanying and for D.G.G. sound at its best, this is a winner.

To sum up, my own choice is Ricci for the Bruch and Gimpel for the Lalo. But

that is a very expensive choice and if I really came to buying these works I should certainly go for this new record by Stern—really good performances and altogether a wonderful bargain.

T.H.

CARPENTER. Adventures in a Perambulator.

PHILLIPS. Selections from McGuffey's Readers. Eastman - Rochester Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. Mercury MRL2542 (12 in., 39s. 11 1/2d.).

I am much indebted to Pye Group Records for letting me have a proof of their sleeve-note to explain these unusual—to say the least!—musical titles. The following is largely taken from this source.

John Alden Carpenter's *Adventures in a Perambulator* was his first large-scale work and dates from 1914. It is a suite of five pieces which set out to describe a child's daily walk with its nurse: the titles show the sort of thing—*En Voiture*, *The Policeman* whom they meet and chat to on the way, *The Hurdy-Gurdy*, its music eventually stopped by the policeman, *The Lake*, a most evocative picture, *Dogs*, and *Dreams*, an *envoi* to round the work off. Each piece is given a long description by the composer and these are printed on the sleeve. It all seems emphatically to be children's music for grown-ups to listen to, not children. I quite enjoyed it but I felt that each piece was too long and ambitious for its slender idea, especially the final one, which takes a long time to come to an end.

Children will greatly enjoy, however, at least the first and last of the three pieces that comprise Burrill Phillips' *Selections from McGuffey's Readers*. Phillips was born in 1907 and is now Professor of Music at Illinois University. This work had its first performance under the present conductor in 1934.

British listeners will first want to know about McGuffey's Readers. They were apparently a famous series of books in American education, published between 1836 and 1857, and were the chief textbooks in many schools. Phillips bases his music on three poems that might have appeared in them: O. W. Holmes' *One Horse Shay*, a love poem by Longfellow and the famous *Midnight Ride of Paul Revere*. I much enjoyed all this and found the music amusing, original and exciting by turn.

We have been much indebted to Howard Hanson for helping us over here to supplement our lamentable lack of opportunity to get to know more about American music and the present disc is a welcome one. Both works seem to be admirably played and the recording is clearly first-rate throughout.

T.H.

DEBUSSY. Printemps: Symphonie Suite. Danse (orch. Ravel).

TURINA. Danzas Fántasticas. Procesión del Rocío, Op. 9. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Robert Irving. H.M.V. CLP1133 (12 in., 35s. 10d.).

This is an interesting and imaginative coupling, and even though three of the works are available elsewhere, the new-

comer—Debussy's *Printemps*—makes the disc well worth while. "That's a nice tune", said my charlady, referring to the jaunty finale of the Debussy suite, "I'll go home and pick it out on the piano". It is indeed a catchy tune, with a broad hint of Chabrier that points to its early origin. This suite in two movements for orchestra and wordless chorus (omitted in nearly all modern performances, as is this one) was the last work actually completed in Rome, when Debussy lodged at the Villa Medici. Although inspired by the *Primavera* of Botticelli, the work had no programme, for Debussy generally disliked too close a link between music and action. But there was certainly an atmosphere of a spring-like kind in abundance. The official judges in Paris, making do with a piano score (the orchestral score was accidentally burned at the binders), immediately noticed the young composer's predilection for "courting the unusual".

In 1890, three years after the completion of *Printemps*, Debussy had collected together a small group of piano pieces, which he succeeded in selling to various publishers. The piece called *Danse*, here presented in Ravel's sparkling orchestration, was originally called *Tarantelle syrienne*: its unusual rhythms and colours evoke an altogether southern climate.

If Debussy savoured the title "musicien français" towards the end of his life, not without justifiable pride, the young man whose *Procesión del Rocio* he had publicly praised might equally well have styled himself "musico español", for he was nothing if not a patriot. Other French musicians besides Debussy helped Turina in his student days, notably Vincent d'Indy, Ravel, and Florent Schmitt, but however much he learned from the French, his idiom was never anything but purely Spanish. After the first performance of his first published work, the *Piano Quintet* in G minor, Albéniz and Falla convinced him that music was not a medium for frivolity and dissipation, but an art which it was his duty as a Spaniard to defend and to further, especially in the interests of Spanish national music. *La procesión del Rocio*, written in 1912, was the first of his orchestral works, and only one other work intervened between it and the *Danzas fantásticas* of 1920. Both works show an enviable command of orchestral sonority, and they have been wonderfully and colourfully realised on this disc by Irving and the Royal Philharmonic. Considering the fact that there are two major works and two shorter ones by each composer, the lower price-range of the disc should commend it doubly to lovers of Debussy and Turina.

D.S.

DUKAS. *L'Apprenti Sorcier*.

ROSSINI-RESPIGHI. *La Boutique Fantasque*. Israel Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. Decca LXT5341 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

To begin with, an absolutely splendid recording—Decca have done the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra well on their first appearance under this label. Put on the start of *La Boutique Fantasque* and leave it

on till you get to the Tarantella if you really want to hear how good the sound is.

And so is the performance. Without going into comparisons of all previous issues, I will just mention the Boston Pops' recent record because it coupled these same two titles. Their dull playing of the Rossini-Respighi bored me and sitting through it was a conscientious duty. This Solti performance is sheer delight, played as it is with the combination of style and gusto it needs, a most exhilarating performance.

The Dukas piece hasn't the sheer excitement of Toscanini's astonishing record but it is well played and will be much enjoyed. My only quarrel with Solti is over a comparatively minor point. He starts the final "spell" on the brass far more quickly than is usual and then does an emphatic pull-up over its last notes, thereby turning Dukas' last crotchet into a quaver. This sounds pernickety criticism. But if Dukas had wanted that, surely he would have written it.

But without doubt this is an excellent debut on Decca and if the titles are what you are wanting, I am sure you will enjoy it greatly. (I ought perhaps to add that the record does not extravagantly devote a whole side to the Dukas piece, as Toscanini's does; the ballet music runs well into side two).

T.H.

DOHNÁNYI. *Variations on a Nursery Song*, Op. 25. *Piano Concerto No. 2 in B minor*, Op. 42. Ernst von Dohnányi (piano). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. H.M.V. ALP1514 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Variations on a Nursery Theme :
Smith, Philh., Sargent (3/54) 33SX1018
Katchen, I.P.O., Boult (9/54) LXT2862
Jacquinot, Philh., Fistoulari (10/54) PMC1005
Simon, Hague P.O., Otterloo (9/57) SBL5210

Dohnányi, at the age of 79, came to the Edinburgh Festival last year to play his *Nursery Variations* in the Usher Hall, and join with the Edinburgh Quartet in performances of his chamber music. He displayed an extraordinary fluent, well-preserved technique, and impressed us especially by his refined, evenly grained tone and the unemphatic, poetical grace of his phrasing. The same qualities are to be heard in these recordings which he made after the Festival—to be heard with special pleasure in the attractive, improvisatory slow movement (*Adagio, poco rubato*) of his Second Piano Concerto. This work, which must be new to many listeners, was played first in Sheffield, then in Birmingham and London (Drury Lane), during December 1947, with the composer as soloist and the Royal Philharmonic under Beecham. It shows the fine working, the easy romanticism without strain or tension in it, the ready flow of agreeable if not arresting ideas, that characterise so much of Dohnányi's music. What his playing lacks now is forcefulness and glitter, qualities that the writing for the solo piano in the outer movements seems to require.

The engineers appear to have matched the mood of his execution in a smooth

equable recording that has no brilliance in it. This takes some of the sparkle out of the *Nursery Variations*. All the expressive, poetical or quietly teasing moments come off beautifully, but to enjoy the coruscating ones we must return to the Decca version.

A.P.

DVORAK. *'Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104.*

FAURE. *Elégie*, Op. 24. Janos Starker ('cello). Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. Columbia 33CX1477 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

'Cello Concerto :

Nelsova, L.S.O., Krips (10/52) LXT2727	(6/54) WLP5236
Janigro, V. Op., Dixon (6/54) LXT2999	(3/55) LXT12999
Fournier, V.P.O., Kubelik (1/56) ALP1306	(1/56) ALP1306
Tortelier, Philh., Sargent (7/56) DGM18236	(4/57) PL9360

Mainardi, Berlin P.O., Lehmann (7/56) DGM18236

Cassado, V.P.M., Perlès (4/57) PL9360

This is a performance that, to put second things first, is certainly the equal of Cassadó's in technical mastery. It is also undeniably a great performance and if I say right away that for myself my choice remains between Cassadó and Tortelier, I shall have to justify myself carefully. It is in the first movement that I enjoy Starker less than the other two. I don't want my soloist to pitch into those passages of figuration in so fiery a manner as Starker does. I prefer them where I think they belong—in the background. I should like more attention to some of Dvořák's dynamic markings. I should like some really quiet playing a good deal more often. These are some of the things that make me prefer the gentler but so stylish Tortelier or the wonderfully all-round accomplishment of Cassadó in this first movement. For the rest I have nothing but admiration. In the slow and last movements Starker shows a real feeling for quiet poetry in the one and wonderful rhythm and attack in the other.

But—and it is this that really decides me that this is a slightly less recommendable record—both the H.M.V. and Vox records get a better balance. This Concerto is full of duets between woodwind soloists and the 'cellist. It is not enough to notice the flute, say, only if you already know it is there: it must be so balanced with the soloist that one's ear accepts the passage at once as a duet. Both of the older records are satisfactory in this way (particularly the H.M.V.) but the defect of balance is considerable in the new.

All the same, everyone will want to hear this Starker performance, even if they come to the same conclusions as I have. There is also Fauré's *Elégie* to be heard but as Tortelier's performance of this lovely piece (not on his Dvořák disc, by the way) is more beguiling, that doesn't greatly affect one's choice.

T.H.

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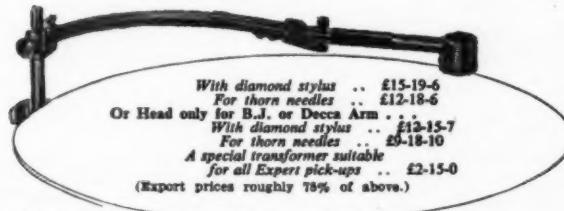
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FALLA. *Nights in the Gardens of Spain. Love the Magician.* **Eduardo del Pueyo** (piano), **Corinne Vozza** (contralto), **Lamoureux Orchestra** conducted by **Jean Martinon**. Philips SBL5213 (12 in., 33s. 8½d.).

Nights in the Gardens of Spain :
Rubinstein, St. Louis S.O., Golschmann (10/53) ALP1065
Novaes, V.P.M., Swarowsky (11/54) PL5520
Soriano, Madrid Chamber Orch., Argenta (8/55) TW91019
Ciccolini, French Nat. Radio Orch., Halffter (8/55) 33CX1221
Curzon, N.S.O., Jordi (11/66) LXT5105 (3/56) LW6210
Love the Magician :
Iriarte, Conservatoire, Argenta (1/53) 33C1004
Eustrati, Berlin P.O., Lehmann (4/56) DGM18177
Rivadineira, Madrid S.O., Branco (2/56) DTL93010
Gabarain, Suisse, Ansermet (7/56) LX3151

In his review of the last *El Amor Brujo* R.F. remarked that he was positively embarrassed by the general excellence of the four records then available and added that choice would probably be finally decided by price, the D.G.G. and Ducretet-Thomson each taking one 12-inch side, the other two taking both sides of a 10-inch. This new issue, judged like that, therefore comes into competition with those two similarly recorded, for it, too, provides a good performance of the work.

But there is the other side to be considered and here the new Philips doesn't hold its own with its rivals. Martinon and his pianist capture much of the piece's atmosphere in the first movement, but the second is too fast (it is marked only *allegretto*), losing much character, while the final scene is often very unclear in its sound—at its beginning, for instance. It does not, in fact, compare with Soriano's performance with Argenta which I still rank as easily the best of all. I simply cannot imagine it better done.

To return to *El Amor Brujo*, though much of this is very good, little things disappoint. The flutes in the *Magic Circle*, marked as an echo, are too loud. The *p* to *f* *crescendi* (and back) at the start of the *Ritual Fire Dance* could be far more effective, while the piano itself, when it should enter *pp* and with the damper pedal, is too loud and matter-of-fact. Points like these here and there spoil a performance and recording that have much in them to praise. And since competition is so keen they count heavily. As to the other four recordings, the pros and cons are so many that I can only refer to R.F.'s notice of July, 1956, for a careful examination of them all. T.H.

KHACHATURIAN. *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra* (1936). **Leonard Pennario** (piano), **Concert Arts Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Felix Slatkin**. Capitol P8349 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Lympany, L.P.O., Fistoulari (3/53) LXT2767
Boukov, Hague P.O., Otterloo (8/55) ABR4039

Pennario's virtuosic, if rather shallow, style of playing is well suited to this Concerto and he brings off the outer movements with much liveliness and finger skill. To the slow movement one might have expected him to be less suited but in fact he plays more poetically and with more variety of

colour than one has often known him to do. The actual piano tone is still shallow, but how much this may be due to the pianist or to the recording is difficult to say. But the recording in general is brighter than the oldish Decca and infinitely more lively than the Philips, which was not one of their successes.

Slatkin keeps the orchestra up to the mark, only at one place in the Finale allowing some sluggishness from the woodwinds. The score includes a flexatone in the slow movement and Decca's record remains the only one to include it. It doubles the violin line and so its absence makes not the least difference to the harmonies but an enormous difference to the sound, of course. A pity, in a recording, not to do something about it.

All the same, and though this is not a wonderful disc in any way, it seems to me to be easily the choice for a recording of this Concerto.

T.H.

LISZT. *Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 2 and 12. Bavarian Symphony Orchestra. Hungarian Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra.* Julian von Karolyi (piano), **Munich Philharmonic Orchestra**. All conducted by **Edmund Nick**. D.G.G. DG17010 (10 in., 30s. 11d.).

Hungarian Fantasy :
Katchen, L.S.O., Gamba (8/56) LXT5164
Anda, Philhar., Ackermann (9/56) 33CX1366
Cziffra, Paris Cons., Dervaux (6/57) ALP1455

Efficient sort of piano playing in the *Fantasia* but not much more. Cziffra plays poetically as well as brilliantly, which is more than Karolyi does. He also plays quietly sometimes—*piano* is a dynamic marking of which Karolyi takes little notice. The only thing really in favour of this new disc is its cheapness but the difference between the performance and Cziffra's, easily the pick of them all, is so great that I cannot recommend it on that score.

Performances of the *Hungarian Rhapsodies* are dull—no Hungarian fire here—and the recording of both sides needs all the top of which your gramophone is capable if it is to acquire the brilliance that is so necessary to this music.

T.H.

MOZART. *Piano Concerto No. 17 in G major, K.453. Gina Bachauer (piano). London Orchestra conducted by Alec Sherman.* H.M.V. DLP1158 (10 in., 27s. 10d.).
Matthews, London Mozart, Blech (5/56) 33SX1044
Haebler, Bamberg S.O., Hollreiser (8/56) PL3930

Miss Bachauer's plain honest way with Mozart yields only limited dividends, for the effect is prosaic and unimaginative. The orchestral support is of the kind reviewers have been deplored for years now, a cushion of instrumental tone whose lack of detail and pointing is emphasised by an unclean, rather murky recording. The woodwind in the first movement, particularly the flute, tends to be swallowed up in string tone. In the Andante it emerges more clearly; but the flute is all but inaudible again in bars 34ff. of the Allegretto, where it is supposed to be carrying the theme. In particular, I can detect no E at all on the second beat of bar 39—

neither in this recording nor in the Columbia one.

I think now that I was too unenthusiastic about that Columbia when reviewing it originally. Certainly—if only by contrast—Denis Matthews's gentle, affectionate account of the solo part is most winning. The woodwind (flute especially) is not forward enough, but not so much obscured as in the new disc, and the recording as a whole is much better. The coupling is the C major Concerto, K.503—of which more decisive versions exist. Miss Bachauer, like Mr. Matthews, uses the first of Mozart's two sets of cadenzas.

A.P.

MOZART. *Symphony No. 39 in E flat major, K.543. Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K.550. Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm.* Philips ABL3152 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).
Coupled as above :
R.P.O., Beecham (3/56) ABL3094

I am not one of those who mind easy-going speeds for Mozart but they can be dangerous. Böhm's start of the G minor, for instance, is too placid and misses the underlying emotion of this dark symphony: his start of the *allegro* of No. 39 is flaccid and only picks up at the first tutti. It is curious that in both these first movements he seems to take time to get going, for both eventually gain rhythm and tension and acquire some excitement. Elsewhere there is good playing and often thoughtful interpretation but there is, too, stiffness and dullness (in much of the G minor's slow movement, for example).

All in all, this is not the Concertgebouw at their best nor Mozart interpretation that ranks with the pick of the available recordings. Böhm uses the earlier version of the G minor, by the way, without clarinets, as does Beecham on his similarly coupled disc, which is also issued by Philips.

As to orchestral balance, pains are taken over this; in the G minor the bassoon is actually too loud, over-balancing the oboes—a rare fault. All is well in No. 39. Horns are inclined to boom, especially in the Trio of the G minor. General quality of sound is good but I must add that my review pressing had some surface crackle at the start of No. 39. This is probably not general but it would be as well to try the start of this side.

I find the Beecham coupling preferable to this new one, though I personally do not much enjoy his conducting of the G minor. For the outstanding performance of that symphony I should without doubt go for the recent Klemperer.

T.H.

PAGANINI-KREISLER. *Concerto in one movement for Violin and Orchestra.*

SAINT-SAËNS. *Violin Concerto No. 3 in B minor, Op. 61. Campoli (violin), London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierino Gamba.* Decca LXT5302 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).
Violin Concerto No. 3 :
Menuhin, L.S.O., Poulet (4/57) ALP1241

What a remarkable thing it is that a work like the Saint-Saëns Concerto, forgotten and a little faded, is now available

in a choice of versions. The choice is clear, it seems to me, for Campoli gives the work just the sort of performance it wants, with his wonderfully easy-sounding virtuosity, his impeccable style and his sheer charm. Menuhin does not sound anything like so much at home. Really beautifully as he plays the middle movement, the outer ones have a good many moments when he doesn't sound so completely at ease: nor does he adapt his style so well to Saint-Saëns.

The Paganini-Kreisler is arranged from the former's First Concerto, according to a refreshingly readable sleeve-note by the violinist, Neville Marriner, who adds the entertaining information that the original was announced by Paganini as in E flat and that this involved other players in incredible technical difficulties until they discovered that the composer tuned up his violin a semitone off-stage and fingered the work in D. (This, by the way, is surely just the sort of trick Kreisler too would have enjoyed.) Kreisler's arrangement turns it all into a very agreeable work with, one suspects, a good deal of Kreisler in it. Since Campoli's virtuosity can deal with Paganini as well as his seductive charm can cope with Kreisler, the result is a great success.

The recording of the orchestra struck me as a little blurred in the Saint-Saëns but admirable in the Paganini-Kreisler, but both sides are perfectly acceptable. Altogether, in fact, a most enjoyable record. T.H.

RACHMANINOV. Symphony No. 2 in E minor, Op. 27. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. R.C.A. RB16026 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

Pittsburgh S.O., Steinberg (6/56) CTL7065
Leningrad P.O., Sanderling (11/56) DGM18327

This symphony is being very lucky in its recorded performances, for here is a third really excellent one. This falls into the Steinberg way of playing Rachmaninov rather than the Sanderling. Sanderling goes the whole hog in tearing at the emotions, putting in every bit of *rubato* at every chance, making the utmost of every phrase and in the process, I cannot help thinking, weakening the work as a whole. But I know that many will fall for it and think it the last word in Rachmaninov playing, just as so many like their Tchaikovsky played in a similar way. The playing itself is certainly wonderful, no doubt about that, and probably the best from any of the three orchestras, while D.G.G. have given it a wonderful sound. There are, in fact, no possible complaints and you are safe to choose it if you want this sort of interpretation.

For myself, give me Steinberg or Boult any day. Here are performances that, while full of romantic spirit, yet keep this side of Rachmaninov more in proportion, with a great gain to the strength of the symphony as a symphony. Boult's performance is distinguished by a most brilliant playing of the Scherzo and in this he scores over Steinberg's slightly slower speed. On the other hand, Steinberg brings out some of those singing melodies

in a rather more satisfying manner, more as if they really belong to him, building the phrases most beautifully and with a wonderfully singing tone from his violins. I think I will stick to him as my choice, though I would be very happy with this new well-played and recorded Boult performance.

T.H.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV. Le Coq d'Or—Suite.

ROSSINI. William Tell—Overture.

TCHAIKOVSKY. Marche Slave. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. R.C.A. RD27014 (12 in., 37s. 6½d.).

The sleeve bears the title "Hi-fi Fiedler and the Boston Pops", together with a photograph of Mr. Fiedler in full evening dress, baton in hand, sitting amiably on a stool surrounded by miscellaneous amplifiers, speakers and valves; it simply cries out for the caption "Yes, but how do you put it together?". In spite of this the recorded sound is not notably better than what we expect nowadays from an orchestral record. (Interesting, incidentally, that engineers seem happier with a large romantic orchestra than with a chamber-music group, though one would expect the former to pose more problems.) The performances of all three works are good, efficient ones, though not of the sort to raise one's temperature in the way that Beecham can with such old war-horses as these. The intonation of the 'cello solo at the beginning of *William Tell* is not above reproach, but the storm makes a splendid racket. In the two Russian pieces there's really little to criticise apart from a lack of warmth, spontaneity and sheer lusciousness of tone about the strings; they don't wear their hearts Slavonically upon their sleeves, these Boston fiddles. J.N.

SCHUMANN. Symphony No. 1 in B flat major, Op. 38, "Spring". Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. Nixa NCT17004 (10 in., 30s. 11½d.).

Suisse, Anermet (10/51) LXT2002
Bamberg S.O., Keilberth (3/54) LGM65010
Boston S.O., Munch (12/54) ALP1203
Berlin R.I.A.S., Fricsay (5/56) DGN18235
Israel P.O., Kletzki (4/57) 39CX1419

It is very good to have Boult's Schumann No. 1 on record, a symphony which he knows from long experience and affection how to judge to a nicety. It is an over-all very good performance which will greatly satisfy the *Davidstund*, including me.

I recently praised lavishly the performance of this same symphony which Kletzki has done for Columbia—and excellent it is, too. It is backed, as I remarked, by a Schumann No. 4 which is full of excesses and cannot be recommended at all. Even so, a single 12-inch side (Kletzki) is still cheaper than a double-sided 10-inch (Boult), even if you never play the other side of the 12-inch. Playing Kletzki again, I enjoyed his performance and I enjoyed its differences from Boult's reading—in general, the making of just that little more of every expression mark—that sort of thing.

But Kletzki does one tiresome thing that I find even more annoying on repeated

hearings, the pulling out of the unison theme that first occurs at bar 53 of the finale. Why, oh why? Boult shows that it is effective enough without wrecking the momentum of the movement and I find that this Kletzki touch now spoils my enjoyment of the whole movement, so irritating does it eventually become. Boult also shows that you can give the Scherzo power while still moving it along at Schumann's *molto vivace* and Kletzki's speed sounds heavy after this.

In fact, fine things as there are in the Kletzki performance, including some excellent orchestral playing, I find I can sit back and enjoy Boult more consistently throughout.

I must in fairness mention the good performance of the symphony by Fricsay. It certainly comes into competition but two whole 12-inch sides mean a cost that simply isn't worth it.

SCHUMANN. Symphony No. 3 in E flat major, Op. 97, "Rhenish". Manfred Overture, Op. 115. Israel Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletzki. Columbia 33CX1473 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Symphony No. 3:
Paris Cons., Schuricht (2/55) LXT2008
Berlin P.O., Leitner (11/55) DG16004
P.P.O., Boult (7/57) NCT17006
N.B.C., Toscanini (0/57) BLP1088

I believe it was Tovey who said that no orchestra ever earned its reputation by its interpretation of Schumann. To corroborate this, he quoted the story of the Meiningen Orchestra's visit to London, and its refusal to play anything at all by Schumann: a refusal which was grudgingly retracted with a promise to include the *Manfred* Overture. This new disc of Kletzki's has been intelligently planned, though (to my ear) hastily recorded. The music for *Manfred*, whose Overture, especially, is one of Schumann's finest and most personal works, was completed in 1849, and the E flat major Symphony was written towards the end of the following year. Both works belong to one of Schumann's best periods of activity, but besides this they have something in common: the key of E flat, and the sombre and sonorous effects in the fourth movement of the symphony and in the main body of the overture. Nothing better than *Manfred* could possibly have been found as a filler for side two.

The Israel Philharmonic have splendid strings but less good woodwind and brass. An exception might be made where the horns are concerned, but I am not so impressed by their trumpets and trombones as I am with the Berlin Philharmonic's. Kletzki is, I feel, aware of this slight unevenness in the orchestral balance, and there are times when he overcomes it in a completely satisfactory manner. The ending of the fourth movement, with its sustained wind and string chords, is a case in point. He is so much at home with Schumann's music, choosing invariably sensible tempi, that I wonder why he has not gone further in his tentative re-scoring. Perhaps he wished to avoid the pitfalls of other Schumann re-orchestrators, such as Wüllner, Mahler, and Stock, the last-mentioned having introduced



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cor anglais and triangle into the scheme of this most German of all Schumann's symphonies. As it is, Kletzki has confined himself to a few judicious octave doublings in the first violins, and generally speaking the effect is to clarify the scoring at the right points.

I am sorry that the conductor's sense of drive and the orchestra's matching zest has sometimes left ragged edges in the ensemble. Especially noticeable are the staccato crotchetts between bars 33 and 40 in the Finale, where the basses seem to lag behind the violins. The moral of this is that if the violinists must use a *sautillé* bowing their bigger brothers have to concentrate on repeated rapidity of speech, by no means an easyfeat when some of the strings are nearly a quarter of an inch thick. In reviewing the Toscanini performance, I expressed a hope that another version would put things right. But Kletzki does not quite fill the bill, though it is only fair to say that he might have done so with another orchestra.

D.S.

TOSCANINI. *Casse-Noisette Suite, Op. 71a* (Tchaikovsky). *William Tell—Overture* (Rossini). *The Skaters Waltz* (Waldteufel). N.B.C. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. H.M.V. ALP1441 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

I wonder what (or who) persuaded Toscanini to take to *Casse-Noisette*. One wouldn't expect him to have been specially interested in it and, to tell the truth, it often doesn't sound as if he is. Or perhaps it is that he really hadn't the touch for this sort of thing. Some of the playing is extraordinarily insensitive, especially in attention to dynamics—the violins in the *Danse Arabe*, for instance. The engineers would seem not to have helped—in the same dance the cor anglais and clarinets are much too near, while the tambourine, instead of being *pp*, sounds like a housemaid rattling teacups. There is a general lack of soft string sound. It is, in fact, a very routine performance which improves at the end, the *Valse des Fleurs* having more of a feeling of enjoyment in its playing than anything else. (It also has, by the way, a quite different ending to the harp cadenza.)

There is no doubt that Beecham is the man for *Casse-Noisette*, especially as he was on his most artful form the day he recorded it (Philips SBR6213) and though Toscanini seems quite to enjoy Waldteufel's *Skaters* there is more grace and charm in, say, Karajan's performance (Col. 33CX1338 or SEL11525).

With a Rossini overture Toscanini is, of course, on home ground and this is easily the best performance on this record, ending with a bit of real virtuoso playing in a very fast account of the march section.

The actual sound of the recording is very good throughout. My only complaints are of balance here and there and of not very effective sound at climaxes. But the two are linked. If you record instruments too loudly in soft passages you will inevitably make your climaxes less effective. T.H.

(Toscanini included the "Casse-Noisette" Suite No. 1 at his first Symphony Concert in 1896 and recorded it in 1943 as a "V" disc, never issued commercially, and again in 1951, which is the date of the above disc.—Music Ed.)

SIBELIUS. *The Swan of Tuonela*—No. 3 of "Four Legends".

STRAUSS, R. *Die Liebe der Danae*—Symphonic Fragments.

VILLA-LOBOS. *Bachianas Brasileiras, No. 4.* Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir John Barbirolli. H.M.V. ALP1335 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

The Swan of Tuonela is beautifully played on this record and works its extraordinary spell once again. The Strauss pieces were new to me and I do not know the opera, which would seem to put me in a not very good position to criticise them. But you may well be equally unfamiliar with them and my reactions may therefore encourage you to try listening yourself. I must confess I fell flat once again for the old Strauss magic and if you are a Straussian you will want this disc and hang what the opera is about. Music like this need not be *about* anything, it sweeps you up in its full-blooded vigour and carries you along with it, especially in a performance as full of ardour as is this one.

The Villa-Lobos, played after this, seemed terribly dull. (It is No. 5 which is the famous and popular one.) Armed with a score this time I did my best to enjoy it but I could not help feeling that if you love Bach, play him or, if you must, orchestrate him for full orchestra. But this sort of stuff, poor Bach and not half enough Brasileiras, I found very boring.

Sir John and the Hallé give marvellous performances of all these works, full of heart, warmth and fervour. Whatever you may think about the Villa-Lobos, the record is well worth getting for Sibelius and Strauss—and then you can forget what I have said and make up your own mind about Villa-Lobos.

T.H.

WAGNER. *Tannhäuser*: Overture and Venusberg music. *Der Fliegende Holländer*: Overture. *Götterdämmerung*: Dawn and Siegfried's Rhine Journey. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Kempe. H.M.V. ALP1513 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

A wonderfully buoyant *Flying Dutchman* (that seems to be the appropriate adjective!), excitingly played and very well recorded. I often wonder if Wagner really meant the *poco ritenuto* that occur so often towards the end to be as drawn out as most conductors make them. Kempe is no exception but right at the end, at the final appearance of the "Dutchman" theme, he does something that is unusual: he makes the regular *rallentando* just before it but then, instead of picking up the speed again, he keeps to a broad, slowish pace, undeniably impressive, even if not indicated in the score. (I wonder if there is any composer's authority for this.)

The *Götterdämmerung* extract is wonderfully played (what an orchestra this is!)

and the only possible complaint is a very small one—of a singularly unconvincing ending. Wagner chunks must be ended somehow but there are less perfunctory possibilities than this.

As to *Tannhäuser* I confess I find most performances of its Overture intolerably tedious but here the Berlin Philharmonic's playing (what a sheerly beautiful string sound and what wonderful brass) and Kempe's sensitive conducting, plus H.M.V.'s recording—all this made me enjoy it thoroughly. Of course, the jump to the *Venusberg* Music dodges that repetition of the Pilgrim's March (and is done here, by the way, complete with voices at the end).

There is the real magic of great conducting and fine playing to be enjoyed all over this record. I can recommend it with enthusiasm.

T.H.

CHAMBER MUSIC

BACH, J. C. *Four Quintets for two Clarinets, two Horns and Bassoon*: No. 1 in E flat major; No. 2 in E flat major; No. 3 in B flat major; No. 4 in E flat major. The French Wind Ensemble. London L'Oriseau Lyre OL50135 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

These immensely attractive quintets were published twelve years after Johann Christian (the "English") Bach's death, by a small Dublin publishing house as *Military Pieces for two clarinets, two horns and a bassoon*, the normal complement of the military band of the late eighteenth century; but they had been written, in all probability, for the Guards' band's daily concerts in St. James's Park, for which larger forces were certainly employed. After publication they seem to have disappeared from notice, and it was only three years ago that Mr. Stanley Sadie discovered a single surviving copy and rescued them from oblivion. His action must be warmly applauded, for the quintets, besides containing delightful music, reveal that Burney spoke no more than the truth in writing of Bach's "richness of harmony, ingenious texture of the parts, and, above all, the new and happy use he had made of wind instruments". These pieces, never merely formal, are full of invention, delicate craftsmanship, and dignity tempered with humour. They are admirably, if a trifle coolly, played by the French Wind Ensemble (e.g. the beautiful *Larghetto* of No. 3 could certainly have stood more emotional playing)—though it may be doubted whether the eighteenth century bassoon sounded quite like this—and the recording is clear and well-balanced. L.S.

"THE GRAMOPHONE" CLASSICAL LP CATALOGUE

September 1957. 3s. 6d.

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BEETHOVEN. Violin Sonatas. No. 3 in E flat major, Op. 12, No. 3: No. 4 in A minor, Op. 23. **Wolfgang Schneiderhan** (violin), **Wilhelm Kempff** (piano). D.G.G. DGM18138 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

<i>Coupled as above :</i>	
Francescatti, Casadesus	(2/55) ABR4025
Heifetz Bay	(3/57) ALP1423
<i>Sonata No. 3 :</i>	
Mehuln, Kentner	(6/53) ALP1050
Fuchs, Balsam	(6/54) AXTL1050
<i>Sonata No. 4 :</i>	
Rostal, Osborn	(11/52) LXT2752
Fuchs, Balsam	(9/54) AXTL1057
Mehuln, Kentner	(3/56) ALP1338

This disc gave me far greater listening pleasure than the previous one in the Schneiderhan-Kempff series, which I discussed in THE GRAMOPHONE two months ago. Schneiderhan was obviously in tip-top form when he recorded the E flat major and the A minor sonatas, and Kempff, too, seems to have reacted favourably to this atmosphere. The team-work is excellent, and the recording is sensitively done, so that all the subtle nuances in tone-colour come through perfectly.

Kempff excels himself in the brilliant piano part of the E flat sonata's first movement, yet he never pretends to play as if it were a concerto, the chamber-music feeling is there all the time, and the ensemble well-nigh irreproachable. In the *Adagio* I find Schneiderhan's cantilena not quite up to standard. There is a slight tendency to uncritical intonation at the ends of notes, a fault that is shared by neither Heifetz nor Francescatti, whose versions are coupled in similar manner to this D.G.G. disc. On the other hand, Schneiderhan's reading of the unusually declamatory coda is by far the most convincing of the three, and he is lively in the *Rondo* without having to sacrifice gracefulness for streamlining, which Fuchs seems to do.

The first movement of the A minor sonata is taken at just the right speed by Schneiderhan and Kempff; Heifetz and Bay are a trifle faster, Francescatti and Casadesus much faster. There is more to it, however, than the individual view of how fast a *Presto* 6/8 should go, for the D.G.G. disc presents us with an almost pastoral, certainly relaxed performance, whereas the Philips disc (at the other extreme) is marked by a Beethovenish roughness which many will prefer. For poetry of phrasing one must go to the D.G.G. disc every time: witness the felicitous touches in the *Andante scherzoso*, when corners are nicely turned and the characteristic syncopations of the opening theme are given such delicate treatment. Even the hustle of the finale gives way, at times, to beautifully poised ritardando passages, and eloquent little turns of phrase in which one instrument exactly mimics the other. Schneiderhan has not the range, of tone-colour displayed by Heifetz, but he is magnificently partnered by Kempff, who easily outshines the discreet Bay.

To sum up, this D.G.G. performance is a classical one, relaxed yet immensely alive and though it is economically less advantageous than the Philips disc, it is well worth the extra money.

D.S.

BRAHMS. Horn Trio in E flat major, Op. 40. **Mieczyslaw Horszowski** (piano), **Alexander Schneider** (violin) **Mason Jones** (horn).

SCHUMANN. Piano Quartet in E flat major, Op. 47. **The New York Quartet** (Mieczyslaw Horszowski, piano; Alexander Schneider, violin; Milton Katims, viola; Frank Miller, 'cello). Philips ABL3121 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

Horn Trio :
Devenny, d'Arco, Ales
Piano Quartet :
Bohle, Barchet Qt.

(3/53) TN22-001

(3/56) PL8900

The Schumann Quartet is given a brilliant and persuasive reading by this New York group, all very talented players with a superb sense of teamwork. There is a rounder tone to the strings than in the Vox disc, and there is no doubt that Philips have succeeded in recording the piano extremely well. Horszowski is a born Schumann player, for he phrases with so much subtlety that the composer's foursquareness recedes into the background. He is well partnered by a string group whose feeling for line has a rare homogeneity. Schneider and Katims playing those *detachés* semiquavers at the beginning of the fourth movement are a sound for sore ears. These players combine silvery brilliance with a classical solidity, and Miller (a refined and sympathetic 'cellist) blends with them to perfection. He avoids making Schumann's sentimental clichés sound like hearts and flowers, combining a warm tone with a crisp technique and a genuine feeling for ensemble work.

I was less pleased with the reverse of this disc, where violinist and pianist are joined by Mason Jones, a good horn-player with a consistently dull, almost muffled tone. He gives the impression that the horn being the louder instrument must continually keep below the dynamic of the violin, which leads not unnaturally to an unsatisfactory balance throughout. Only in the Finale is there a bolder display of brass, and by then it is too late. Yet it is a better performance than the oddly-sounding Esquire disc, with its luscious violin and saxophonic horn. The ideal recording of the Brahms Horn Trio has yet to be made: for some (including the present reviewer) it may never be made, now that the deeply lamented Dennis Brain is lost to us.

D.S.

MOZART. Violin Sonatas : No. 32 in B flat major, K.454; No. 34 in A major, K.526. **Arthur Grumiaux** (violin), **Clara Haskil** (piano). Philips ABL3144 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

Coupled as above :
Grinke, Taylor (7/55) LXT2802
Sonata No. 32 :
Heifetz, Smith (9/56) ALP1331
D. Oistrakh, Yampolsky (3/57) 33CX1415

This is ideal Mozart playing: clear, radiant, yet warm and human. An LP counterpart, I would say, to the Goldberg-Kraus records which are still treasured among the 78s we would not part with. Grumiaux, with Bach, Mozart and Paganini concertos to his credit in the LP catalogue, has penetrated beyond technique to the

point where sheer artistry begins, and Haskil (who has also recorded Bach and Mozart as well as Schubert and Schumann) proves herself a wonderful partner in these most difficult of all duos.

There is an identical Decca coupling, but although Grinke and Taylor give a musical performance they manage to sound tentative and hesitant. Mozart was a virile composer, as any reader of his correspondence will discover, and his music needs a virile touch. This is supplied with the greatest artistry by Grumiaux, and Haskil more than matches him in the brilliance of the A major sonata and the wonderful mixture of statuesque grace and ebullient fun in the B flat sonata. Heifetz, whom R.F. found not quite satisfactory, I would discount for one thing only, setting aside his too rapid tempos for the first and last movements: that is the slide between the first and second notes of the *Andante*. Oistrakh is good, but Yampolsky is no match for Haskil, for he plays the accompanist too much when he should by rights come to the fore.

This Philips disc is a "must" for all keen collectors of fine sonata-playing: when they have heard it I am sure that they will ask for more: and if Philips gives us more, that will be a matter for rejoicing, for their recording and surface is of the same high standard as the performances. D.S.

SCHUBERT. Rondeau Brillant in B minor, Op. 70 (D.895). Fantaisie in C major, Op. 159 (D.934). **Johanna Martzy** (violin), **Jean Antonietti** (piano). Columbia 33CX1372 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Coupled as above :

Rostal, Horsley (5/57) CLP1112

H.M.V. provided an economical and convenient complete edition of Schubert's works for violin and piano on two plumb-label discs; the Columbia alternative takes three, and at "celebrity" price. But J.N. last May preferred the Martzy/Antonietti version of the sonatinas and sonata; and I follow him in preferring the same duo in the C major Fantasy. About the *Rondeau brillant* I am not so sure. Rostal and Colin Horsley take *allegro* to mean something faster than the present interpreters; the result is more *brilliant*, more fiery in style, perhaps even a little too agitated. It also means that the playing is more faulty; Johanna Martzy and Jean Antonietti find more time to give a shapely turn to the phrases, and to grade the tone within them more exactly. The piece seems to go on rather a long time, but it is beautifully realised.

Who is M. Antonietti? On the strength of his (or is it her?) playing in this Schubert series, one would like to hear more records by him. He has a lovely clear, full, even tone, displayed in well-graded, limpid passage-work and in excellently balanced chords. He plays with great aplomb, and with Miss Martzy makes a perfect duo. Her tone is beautifully pure (unlike Rostal's) and recorded with depth and roundness. The C major Fantasy is most winning in this performance.

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Sketch by Oliver Messel

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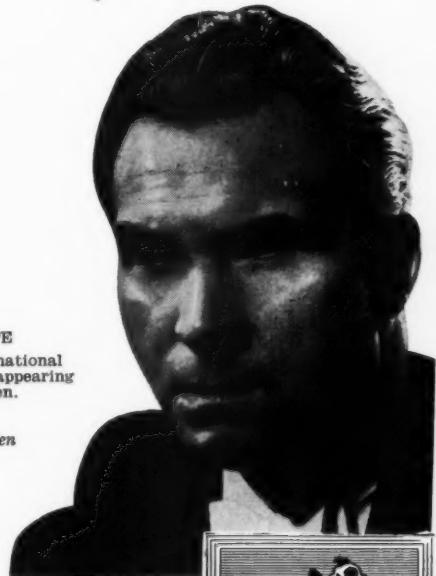
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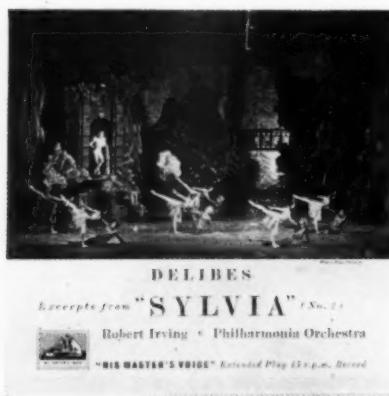


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SCHUBERT. *Sonata in A major, Op. 162 (D.574).* *Sonatina No. 1 in D major, Op. 137, No. 1 (D.384).* *Fourth movement from Sonatina in G minor, Op. 137, No. 3.* Arthur Grumiaux (violin), Riccardo Castagnone (piano). Philips SBR6230 (10 in., 25s. 4½d.).

Op. 162 :
Martz, Antonietti (11/58) 33CX1390
Rostal, Horsley (5/57) CLP1113
Op. 137, No. 1 :
Martz, Antonietti (11/58) 33CX1359
Rostal, Horsley (5/57) CLP1112

It's an awkward business when a particular recording acquires the reputation of being "definitive". It makes for lazy criticism and unfairness towards other interpretations. Nevertheless I feel that Johanna Martzy's version of the Schubert violin sonata and sonatinas is still quite undeniably the best, and for that matter not likely to be surpassed. Not, certainly, by this one, although it has the advantage of being much cheaper. In these works it is most important that the two instruments should take part on equal terms, and Grumiaux and his pianist don't give the impression that they are willing to do that—or even able, perhaps, since the pianist doesn't show the same degree of technical assurance as Grumiaux; he has a particularly irritating tendency to over-pedal. Grumiaux himself doesn't seem to me to strike the necessary note of domestic charm, although he contributes some lovely moments—such as the third movement of the D major sonatina. Altogether this is rather a reach-me-down performance of music which, though modest, deserves more than that.

J.N.

DI VITO AND MENUHIN. *Trio Sonata in G minor, Op. 2, No. 8* (Handel) (a). *Trio Sonata in F major, "Golden Sonata"* (Purcell) (b). *Duo in D major, Op. 67, No. 2*—Larghetto and Rondo only (Spohr) (c). *Duo in G minor, Op. 67, No. 3*—Allegro only (Spohr) (d). *Duo in G major* (Viotti) (e). *Gioconda di Vito* (violin). **Yehudi Menuhin** (violin) with **Raymond Leppard** (harpsichord), **John Shinebourne** ('cello) in (a) and (b). H.M.V. ALP1462 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

When two great artists such as Gioconda di Vito and Yehudi Menuhin play duets, the result is bound to be enlightening. Will these strongly individual personalities refuse to blend, or will they give and take, as all good duettists should? This disc gives us the best of both possibilities, for the personalities of the two remain distinct enough to enable the careful listener to make out who is playing, yet the timbre of both instruments together presents a homogeneous and delightful blend.

Their style, in the sonatas by Purcell and Handel, is fair only. A less literal interpretation of the notes would have made for a more lively result. But there is some noble and dignified playing as well as a welcome display of the lighter touch (in the finale of the Purcell sonata, for instance) so that admirers of de Vito and Menuhin will surely rejoice to hear them in something

unusual. There is one serious fault on this side of the disc, however, for John Shinebourne's artistic 'cello-playing can be heard in the same perspective as the violins, whereas the harpsichord is way off in the distance. Only when Mr. Leppard plays brief passages on his own, or else climbs towards the summit of the keyboard, do we have a chance to hear some of the interesting things he is doing. I very much hope that H.M.V.'s sound engineers will not make this kind of mistake again.

The reverse side is devoted to duos pure and simple; the kind of thing that violinists still like to amuse themselves with, at home and not in the concert hall. Music by Viotti and Spohr is still, of course, used extensively for teaching purposes, and it may well be asked whether we shall not have, at some time in the future, wagonloads of Pleyel, Papini, and Kalliwoda now that we have a handsome selection from Viotti and Spohr. Both were fine violinists and adequate composers, and oddly enough Spohr once asked to study with Viotti, who was then in London, and answered to the effect that he accepted no pupils because he had become a merchant, having discovered that the English preferred wine to music. But Viotti, in his prime, drew a bow like silk though powered by a Herculean arm (to paraphrase Baillot). His gracious playing is in some ways reflected in his music. Spohr's duo, on the other hand, has more sound and fury, for when each violinist plays double-stops the result is four-part harmony, though of a peculiar and unusual sonority. Recommended for fiddlers.

D.S.

LES LULLISTES. *Le Temple de la Paix*

(J. B. Lully) : Ouverture ; Troupe des nymphes, des bergers et bergères ; Menuet ; Entrée des bergers et bergères ; Rondeau ; Entrée des Basques ; Menuts I and II ; Passepieds I and II. *Le Journal de Printemps* (J. C. F. Fischer) : Ouverture ; Plainte ; Gigue ; Bourrée ; Menuet. **Nobles Jeunesse—Florilegia II, Suite No. 1** (Georg Muffat) : Ouverture ; Entrée d'Espagnoles ; Air pour des Hollandais ; Gigue pour des Anglais ; Gavotte pour des Italiens ; Menuet pour des François. **L'Ensemble Orchestral de L'Oiseau Lyre** conducted by **Louis Froment**. London L'Oiseau Lyre OL50136 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

Lovers of Lully and the *grand siècle* have hitherto been obliged to rely on somewhat mottled versions of his orchestral music, though the presence of two large-scale choral works in our catalogues make it easier for the connoisseur to assess Lully's true worth as a marshal of large forces. In his own day, he was notorious as a ruthless orchestral trainer, besides being a fantastic character as far as profligacy, rapacity, intrigue and insinuation were concerned. People who despair of the twentieth century might do well to comfort themselves by the thought that there is nobody nowadays quite like Lully in the musical world. Some time ago, a French-

man wrote a book about Lully, with the sub-title "business man, landlord, and musician". The fact that music is mentioned last of all need not however be taken as a denigration of Lully's powers. He was a very able performer and composer, and other musicians flocked from all quarters of Europe to play under him and study with him.

With this basis of historical fact, it is only just that a work by Lully should take its rightful place among the many discs of orchestral music now in circulation. Charles Cudworth, whose informative sleeve notes are a model of their kind, has chosen a late ballet, *Le Temple de la Paix*, which was first performed at Fontainebleau in the autumn of 1685, just two years before Lully's death. In the previous year France had signed a twenty-year truce with the Empire at Regensburg, and Lully (helped by Racine) had obediently concocted an *Idylle sur la Paix* which was performed before the King at Sceaux. Peace nevertheless remained the main topic of political conversation at court, and Lully, with his favourite librettist and collaborator, Quinault, once more obliged in 1685. This ballet music has certain links with similar musical genres of today, and it can be warmly recommended to ballet enthusiasts who wish to broaden their historical perspective. There are many charming tunes, a little formal, perhaps, but none the less intriguing for their frequently unusual phrase-lengths; and there is much to be enjoyed in the predominantly simple yet effective instrumentation, which has a peculiar richness through being conceived as five-part, instead of the more common four-part texture. This French love of richness in part-writing, derived in all probability from the five-part norm of the Italian madrigal, had certain disadvantages, the foremost being the amount of time taken to compose an opera or ballet in which the main orchestral numbers would be in five real parts. Lully had at least two secretaries who filled in the three middle parts between the outline of melody and bass which he wrote out for them, and although some have felt this to be unscrupulous, it is certainly no more reprehensible a practice than those found in the entertainment world today, when one composer picks out a tune on the ivories, another harmonises it, and a third orchestrates it. Ghosting is no new invention.

In contrast with these frequent passages of rich sonority there are delightful interludes for woodwind trio which can be heard in several of the movements in this suite. The total effect is one of nobility allied with graceful detail—a musical counterpart, in effect, to the splendid interiors of Versailles by Lebrun, or the magnificent scenery with which Bérain graced the operas and ballets of Lully. Louis de Froment gives a spirited performance, correct in nearly every detail of performance practice, though at times a little too fast (the *vif* section of the Overture, for example).

Lully's students and imitators were legion, and some few were successful, notably Ferdinand Fischer and Georg Muffat, who for all their German background behaved and wrote like dyed-in-the-wool Frenchmen. Fischer's second suite from *Le Journal de Printemps* is a real little masterpiece, all the more amazing for being the composer's very first published work. In some ways Fischer's harmony is more attractive than his master's, looking forward as it does to an era whose new experiments in modulation set the stage for the development of symphonic form. Fischer's outlook, if not entirely symphonic, is certainly at several removes from the formal and functional dances of the French court.

Muffat's suite, too, is interesting in that it shows how a skilled composer could take over Lully's virtues and leave aside some of his faults. Muffat had no secretaries, and his inner parts have more to say than Lully's, because they had to be carefully worked out by the composer himself. *Nobles Jeunesse* is however typically French in that it exploits the realm of the exotic: dances for Spaniards, Dutch, English, Italians, and French were part and parcel of every really lively court ballet, as Paquot has pointed out in his book *Les Etrangers dans les Divertissements de la Cour*. Once again the performance here is well matched by the excellence of the recording. D.S.

INSTRUMENTAL

BACH. *Toccata and Fugue in D minor, BWV565. Fantasia in G minor, BWV542. Fantasia in C minor, BWV562. Chorale Preludes*: Wachet auf (Schübler, No. 1, BWV 645); In dir ist Freude (Orgelbüchlein, No. 17, BWV615). *Prelude in E minor, BWV533. Prelude in C minor, BWV546. Prelude in A minor, BWV543. Edouard Commette* (organ). Columbia 33CX1478 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.). Recorded at the Cathedral of St. Jean, Lyon.

Edouard Commette gives a full-blooded and virtuoso performance of the Toccata and Fugue in D minor, sensational—no less—recorded, and one that will provide an antidote to those who have had too much of *baroquerie* (this word is not in the dictionary). The St. Jean organ has very fine pedal reeds and M. Commette makes full use of them. He has to cope with an echo of about four seconds and judges it well, but it must be confessed that in the G minor Fantasia (played without its Fugue) one begins to weary of heavy pedal reeds and it is a relief when the mellow diapasons are used (on manuals and pedals) for the wonderful ascending chromatic passage with descending pedal bass: the player achieves a fine crescendo here. The top part is lost in a roar of tone at the end. M. Commette plays the C minor Fantasia on the diapasons alone and apparently has some difficulty here and there with sticky notes.

In *Wachet auf* a fine solo trumpet is used for the chorale melody. Of the three

Preludes (E minor, C minor, A minor), all of which are shorn of their Fugues, I enjoyed only the A minor, quietly played on foundation stops, for the "little" E minor sounded far too loud and the opening of the C minor was so confused as to be at first unrecognisable.

The choice of material is odd and acoustics harm the clarity of some of the pieces but these disadvantages may be overlooked by those who want to hear this distinguished French organist and his instrument.

A.R.

BRAHMS. *Six Pieces, Op. 118*: No. 1, Intermezzo in A minor; No. 2, Intermezzo in A major; No. 3, Ballade in G minor; No. 4, Intermezzo in F minor; No. 5, Romanze in F major; No. 6, Intermezzo in E flat minor. *Capriccio in B minor, Op. 76, No. 2. Intermezzo in E flat major, Op. 117. Rhapsody in B minor, Op. 79, No. 1. Intermezzo*: No. 6 in E major, Op. 116; No. 2 in E minor, Op. 119; No. 3 in C major, Op. 119. *Wilhelm Backhaus* (piano). Decca LXT5308 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

Collectors who remember, or possibly still possess, the famous Backhaus album which H.M.V. called "Representative Piano Works of Brahms" will be interested in another Backhaus recital on these lines. Some of the pieces duplicate those formerly available on 78s, while others are new to the catalogue. This great pianist's feeling for Brahmsian breadth, which has been part and parcel of his equipment ever since his student days at Leipzig and Frankfurt, does not unfortunately come over as it should. Indeed, when I first played over the A minor Intermezzo (first band of side 1) the piano tone sounded so tinny and unattractive that I wondered whether this performance was a copy of something issued earlier. Compared with other LPs of Brahms's piano music, this Decca disc is hopelessly distorted, though the reason is not clear. As the disc progresses, things improve a little, but not greatly. This is a fine recital spoilt by poor recording. D.S.

BUXTEHUDE. *Prelude and Fugue in A minor. Canzon in C major. Toccata in F major. Canzon (Fugue) in G major. Passacaglia in D minor. Prelude and Fugue in D minor. Ciacona in E major. Fugue in G major. Canzonetta in E minor. Prelude and Fugue in G minor. Finn Viderö (organ)*. H.M.V. ALPC4 (12in., 41s. 8½d.). Recorded on the organ of the monastery church at Sorø, Denmark. Available to Special Order only.

The purpose of this record, it is stated on the cover, is to commemorate the two hundredth anniversary of the death of Buxtehude, the greatest organ composer of his time, who profoundly influenced Bach. If only all commemorative records were like this—I am thinking, rather wryly, of the spate of indifferent Mozart discs last year—then anniversary celebrations would have

some real significance instead of being, as they often appear to be, merely a convenient excuse for performers and music executives. For here is a representative selection of the Danish master's works, ranging from the great D minor Passacaglia and the dazzling D minor Prelude and Fugue to Canzonas for manuals only, played by an artist of the front rank (who is also an expert on the composer) on a splendid instrument of the right tonal type, and recorded with outstanding fidelity: from every point of view this is a magnificent disc. To round off the job properly, the cover has an excellent photograph of Buxtehude's own organ in Elsinore, and Mr. Viderö, besides giving particulars of the editions he has used and the specification of the Sorø monastery organ, thoughtfully provides details of all his registrations, with bar references—a valuable aid to organ enthusiasts and to students who wish to learn something of authentic Buxtehude style. A few more records like this issued a bit earlier (and even now, I see with regret, this is only on special order), and we might have avoided some of the more arrant twaddle about baroque organs talked by our more hide-bound musicians and organ-fanciers. But, most important, this makes deeply satisfying listening. Congratulations to all concerned.

L.S.

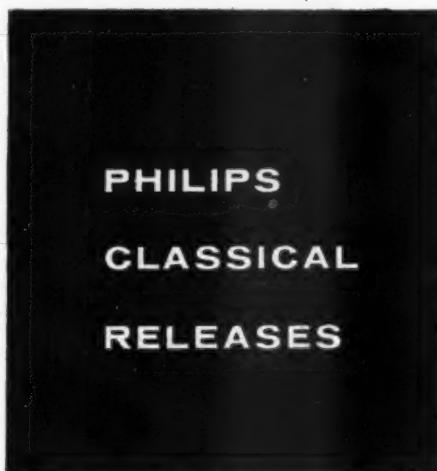
MENDELSSOHN. *17 Songs Without Words*. **Walter Giesecking** (piano). Columbia 33CX1479 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

No. 1 in E major, Op. 19, No. 1: No. 6 in G minor, Op. 19, No. 6: No. 12 in F sharp minor, Op. 30, No. 6: No. 16 in A major, Op. 28, No. 4: No. 16 in A flat major, Op. 38, No. 6: No. 20 in E flat major, Op. 53, No. 2: No. 21 in G minor, Op. 53, No. 3: No. 22 in F major, Op. 53, No. 4: No. 23 in G major, Op. 62, No. 1: No. 29 in A minor, Op. 62, No. 5: No. 30 in A major, Op. 62, No. 6: No. 33 in B flat major, Op. 67, No. 3: No. 34 in C major, Op. 67, No. 4: No. 40 in D major, Op. 85, No. 4: No. 42 in B flat major, Op. 85, No. 6: No. 45 in C major, Op. 102, No. 3: No. 47 in A major, Op. 102, No. 5.

I am still at odds with Harold Schonberg about Giesecking's Mendelssohn disc (August issue, p. 91) in which I do not find the "hesitations and actual fumbling" that he mentions. Perhaps I expressed myself badly about the passages the artist found "tricky". Giesecking was familiar with all the pieces, those he played and those he did not, and was certainly not sight-reading them, but he had not perhaps played them for some time: his views on practice are well known. I can say that he spent some time rehearsing the "tricky" bits and was satisfied with the results.

Did Mr. Schonberg listen with the music before him, did he take note of Mendelssohn's pedal directions? Op. 85, No. 5 in B flat is, in the accompaniment, marked *sempre staccato* throughout so that the sustaining pedal cannot be used and yet the melody at the top must be made to sound *sempre cantabile*. One has only to try to do this to realise how wonderfully Giesecking plays the piece according to the composer's directions. This, for me, was the highlight of his performance.

What appear to be "hesitations" are merely the result of the player's approach to the music. He uses a slower tempo than is customary in several of them, the E major

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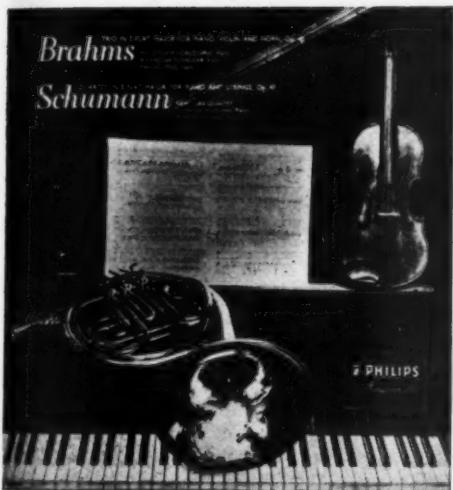
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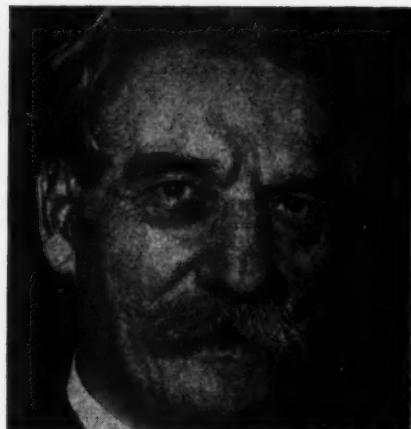
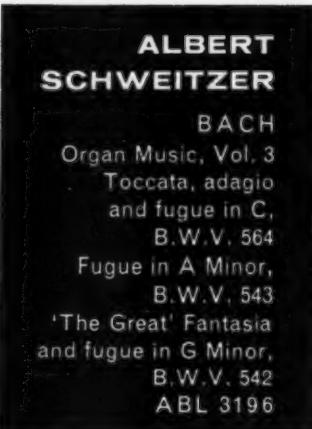
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(Op. 19, No. 1) and the equally well-known "Duetto" in A flat major (Op. 38, No. 6); and he really makes the pieces songs without words. I find here a marvellous subordination of accompaniment to melody, innumerable shades of tone, a delicacy and tenderness that is most moving.

The celebrated "Spring Song" and Bees Wedding (or "Spinning Song"/), Op. 62, No. 6 and Op. 67, No. 4, are played with a freshness and poetry altogether admirable, and the same is true of the three Venetian Boat Songs (Op. 19, No. 6; Op. 30, No. 6; Op. 62, No. 5) which are most evocatively done. In fact I enjoyed everything on this record, in which the piano tone is admirable throughout, and it shed new light on music that is all too easily dismissed as of little worth. I hope Mr. Schonberg will be able to revise his opinion of the performances, even if he does not find equal perfection everywhere. A.R.

DEBUSSY. Deux Arabesques. Preludes, Book 1: La fille aux cheveux de lin; La cathédrale engloutie. **Preludes, Book 2:** Les fées sont d'exquises danseuses; General Lavine—Eccentric; La Puerta del Vino. **Images, Set 2:** Poissons d'or. **La plus que lente. Estampes:** Pagodes; La soirée dans Grenade; Jardins sous la pluie. **Hans Henkemans** (piano). Phillips SBL5200 (12 in., 33s. 8½d.).

In the April, 1955, number of THE GRAMOPHONE R.F. spoke of Hans Henkemans' playing of Debussy as "electrically good". I am not sure I would go so far as that, but certainly it is very good and artistic. The present disc includes the material there reviewed, the two *Arabesques*, *La fille au cheveux de lin*, *La plus que lente* (which one could dispense with), *La puerta del vino* and *Poissons d'or*, and adds the items mentioned above. There is much to commend here, but I found *Poissons d'or* too robustly played—goldfish dart about less robustly than this—and the triplet semi-quavers in *La fille au cheveux de lin* need, as Cortot has said, to be treated lightly. The pianist is admirable in *General Lavine*, *La cathédrale engloutie*, *La puerta del vino* and the three pieces of *Estampes*, particularly *Jardins sous la pluie*, but in *Les fées sont d'exquises danseuses* I can detect no difference between his *p* and *pp* or even *p* and *mf*. Debussy wanted very subtle shades of tone here but perhaps they cannot be adequately realised in a recording.

The recorded piano tone is very good up to *mf*, but a bit shallow in *forte*. A.R.

SCHUBERT. Sonata No. 21 in B flat major, Op. posth. (D.960). Adrian Aeschbacher (piano). D.G.G. DGM18139 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

Wuehrer (3/54) PL8210
Haskil (2/55) ABL3029
Horowitz (4/57) ALP1430

Kempff's performance is gone; but now that H.M.V. have embarked in earnest on their "Great Recordings of the Century", Schnabel's memorable account will no doubt be returning. Meanwhile three of those listed above, Aeschbacher's, Wührer's and Haskil's (Horowitz's does not call for serious consideration) are deeply enjoyable.

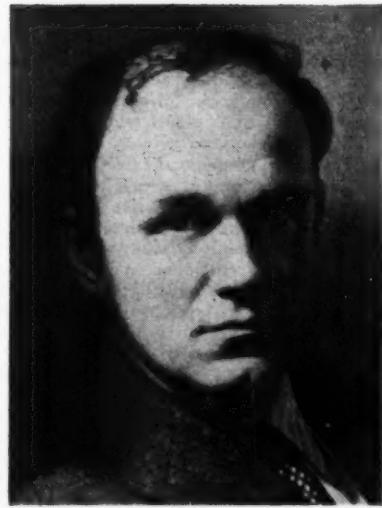
In many ways I like the new D.G.G. best of all. Aeschbacher is lyrical and serene in the opening movement. He seems to be playing from greater strength than Clara Haskil, who brings a shade of vehemence, now and again, to her more impetuous reading. Aeschbacher always sings, and breathes in long phrases. In the Andante sostenuto he achieves the climax by producing an ever deeper and warmer glow—where Wührer tends perhaps towards violence, even a touch of temper. The Scherzo goes at an easy, unflustered pace, and with an elegance that makes it seem nimble than a less tidy performance at a faster tempo. The Finale, Allegro ma non troppo, is also taken at a nice easy, natural speed, lively but unhurried; and the playing of the melodies is pellucid. One feature in this movement may be thought questionable: a slight increase of pace at a *sotto voce* episode. Personally I find this quite acceptable. There is a great deal of variety in the performance. Loving care and much thought has obviously gone into the making of it; it contains a perfect blend of spontaneity in the phrasing and well-proportioned shaping of movements. The recorded piano tone is very clear, though also full and warm, without the bright shallowness that the first epithet sometimes implies.

In fact the only drawback is one of price. Here the Sonata is spread over two whole sides; whereas Vox found room too for the A minor Sonata, D.784; and Philips for a lovely performance of the first eight of Schumann's *Bunte Blätter*. A.P.

SCHUMANN. Fantasiestücke, Op. 12: Des Abends; Aufschwung; Warum?; In der Nacht; Traumes Wirren; Ende vom Lied. **March No. 2 in G minor, Op. 76. Waldszenen, Op. 82.** **Sviatoslav Richter** (piano). D.G.G. DGM18355 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

This is a record which demands, to use a horrible but expressive term, a "rave notice". I have never heard such exquisitely poetical playing of Schumann as Sviatoslav Richter gives us in his performance of these pieces. His touch is magical, his part playing superb, and he creates the atmosphere of each piece in an unforgettable way. His playing of *Des Abends* and *Warum?* is something I have dreamt of but never heard realised as it is here. The very spirit of a serene evening dwells in the first of these two pieces, and the tender questioning of lovers in the other. *In der Nacht* is a true and passionate nocturne and the feathery finger work in *Traumes Wirren* (Dream Visions) is breathtaking. The way Richter plays the *poco meno mosso* sections of *Aufschwung* (Soaring) made me long to hear him in Chopin. In this and the final piece and in the revolutionary *March* and *Jäger auf der Lager* (Huntsman in ambush)—this last being the second number of *Forest Scenes*—we get a glimpse of the power at his command.

With the exception of *Verrugene Stelle* (The Evil Spot) and the well known *Vogel als Prophet* (The Prophet Bird), both beautifully played, we do not often hear the *Forest*



Sviatoslav Richter.

Scenes, but Richter makes all of them interesting and worth while.

No words can describe the exceptional beauty of his touch, but it has evidently been finely captured in a recording of exceptional excellence. This magnificent Russian pianist, awarded his country's highest artistic prize in 1955, was born, in 1915, at Zitomir in the Ukraine, and achieved sensational success when he began his concert career in 1942. Perhaps his glorious singing touch owes something to his passionate love of opera. His repertoire is said to include "all the important piano music from Bach onwards", and his memory to be phenomenal. So far he has resisted all offers to tour outside the U.S.S.R., though the present recording, his first for D.G.G., was made in Prague. It has had a wildly enthusiastic reception in America and I prophecy that it will do so here among lovers of pianism of the highest order of artistry in every respect. A.R.

ELMAN RECITAL. Passacaglia (Sammartini, arr. Nachez); **Chaconne** (Vitali, arr. Charlier); **Sonata No. 4 in D major, Op. 1, No. 13** (Handel); **Suite No. 3 in D major** (Bach)—Air on the G string. **Mischa Elman** (violin), **Joseph Seiger** (piano). Decca LXT5303 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

Elman playing encores is one proposition; Elman as a purveyor of old violin music quite another. However baroque in spirit his wayward rubatos, it is impossible to commend them in the letter. Rubato when well-used is one of the most subtle and artistic manifestations of violinistic legerdemain. Elman, alas, is long past the rubato stage: he simply pulls, or pushes, the poor long-suffering music about. Sammartini's *Passacaglia* is an interesting enough piece, though some may gnash their teeth over Nachez and his wondrous works. But most of the time Elman's melodic line is so contorted that it's almost impossible to concentrate on the music.

The Vitali *Chaconne* is, in some places,

technically beyond Elman's present powers. Even as Vitali wrote it, the piece is quite difficult enough, and with Leopold Charlier's additional intricacies some of it is almost formidable. Even in cantabile passages, Elman plays tricks with the dynamics of successive notes in a phrase, digging hard at one, and caressing the next, all for no apparent reason. The first movement of the Handel sonata is well-nigh unbelievable as a possible interpretation of even a frequently misinterpreted work, though the remaining movements are slightly better. Regarding the *Air on the G string*, it would be charitable to pass this over in silence.

The general impression of the record is not enhanced by the fact that the labels are reversed. The sleeve note ("All four works on this disc are characteristic of what violinists call the 'Bach style'") is roughly on a level with the performances. Except as a curiosity, it is not possible to recommend this disc.

D.S.

HARPSICHORD WORKS. *The Tenth Pavian and Galliarde*, "Mr. W. Peter" (Byrd). *Variations on "Mein junges Leben hat ein End"* (Sweelinck). *Toccata No. 2* (Froberger). *Ciaccona* (Pachelbel). *Prelude and Fugue in A minor* (J. S. Bach). *Le Dodo, ou L'Amour au berceau*; *Les Vieux Seigneurs: Les Jeunes Seigneurs* (Couperin). *L'Entretien des Muses; Les Cyclopes* (Rameau). *Tiento I; Tiento III* (Cabezón). *Balletto: Corrente: Passacaglia* (Frescobaldi). *Sonata in F major, L.198*: *Sonata in F major, L. Supp. 19*: *Sonata in F major, L.278*: *Sonata in F major, L.381* (D. Scarlatti). **Ralph Kirkpatrick** (harpsichord). H.M.V. ALP1518 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

A most enjoyable recital, in the main. When one considers Kirkpatrick's reputation as a performer and scholar, it is surprising that he is so poorly represented in our catalogues. Side one traces a neat line of development from Byrd to Bach, through Sweelinck, Froberger and Pachelbel. Unfortunately, the Tenth Pavian and Galliard is not by any means one of Byrd's best works, and it compares poorly with the Sweelinck variations. The Froberger *Toccata* (which interested listeners can find in the second volume of Davison and Apel's *Historical Anthology of Music*) is however a good and typical example of his work. The chromatic point of the second section, elaborated in the gigue-like finale, was a commonplace of the early seventeenth century, but Froberger uses it in an altogether personal manner. Pachelbel's *Ciaccona* makes use of a hoary but perennial ground-bass pattern, and the melodic fireworks superimposed are ably dealt with by Kirkpatrick, though he keeps virtuosity in check by his musical and convincing tempi. The Bach *Prelude and Fugue*, with its opening reminiscence of the Triple concerto for flute, violin, and harpsichord (also in A minor), is a fine performance.

Side two is a congenial mixture of French,

Spanish and Italian music. Couperin's drowsy Cupid and the juxtaposition of advocates of old and new schools in musical style are very effective. Likewise the Rameau pieces are well contrasted, a slow soft being followed by a quick loud. The two *Tientos* by Cabezón sound well on the harpsichord, though not particularly well on the harpsichord used by Kirkpatrick. Henestrosa assembled these pieces, along with many others, in an anthology for keyboard, harp, or vihuela, published in 1557, and more recently available in *La Música en la Corte de Carlos V* (Higinio Anglés). The little triptych by Frescobaldi came out in his final edition of the First Book of Toccatas (1637) and they constitute a charming example of stylised dance-music current at that time. To end with, Kirkpatrick gives us two pairs of Scarlatti sonatas, all four in F major. If anybody thinks that such a key-scheme is capable of inducing boredom, he has only to listen to this last band in order to find out.

Notwithstanding Kirkpatrick's fine playing and intelligent programming, I find the harpsichord tone rather edgy and unpleasant in the louder passages. Perhaps the fault may lie partly with the recording, or the studio acoustic. It seems a pity that the listener's ears should have to be assailed as if by a battery of machine-guns, however accurately tuned they may be. In the quieter pieces, the first of the Couperin and Rameau bands, for instance, it seems to be quite a different instrument. D.S.

HOROWITZ IN RECITAL. *Sonata in F minor, Op. 14* (Schumann): 3rd movement only. *Sonata in E major, L.23* (Scarlatti). *Mazurka in B flat minor, Op. 24, No. 4* (Chopin). *Polonaise-Fantaisie, Op. 61* (Chopin). *Sonata in E flat major, Op. 78* (Haydn). *Intermezzo in B flat minor, Op. 117, No. 2* (Brahms). *Etincelles* (Moszkowski). *Preludes* (Scriabin): Op. 11, No. 5 in D major; Op. 22, No. 1, in G sharp minor. *Stars and Stripes Forever* (Sousa, trans. Horowitz). **Vladimir Horowitz** (piano). R.C.A. RB16019 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

The only point of an anthology record of this kind is to give us a kind of musical profile of the performer, and I think that Horowitz emerges pretty clearly from this one, with both his good qualities and his limitations. To get the latter out of the way first it must be admitted that the Scarlatti sonata is played with a tender wistfulness that its composer, writing for the harpsichord, could never have intended, and that the Haydn sonata is lacking in good humour. The Chopin pieces are more successful, though the mazurka is perhaps a little over-sophisticated; this surely is the way that Liszt must have played the Polonaise-Fantaisie, to judge by his description of it quoted in the sleeve-note. The Brahms lacks that quality of inwardness which some German pianists bring to it, but here, as throughout the disc, one is conscious of Horowitz's astounding mastery, not merely of the fireworks of the keyboard,

but of the subtlest shades of tone-production. The recorded piano tone is rather variable; some at least of the pieces appear to have been recorded at a recital in 1952, and there is a suspicion of tape-flutter at the beginning of one or two. But in spite of this the listener gets an impression of Horowitz's immense range of tone-colour—from the soft legato he uses in the Scarlatti, through the rich chordal sonorities of the Schumann variations to the devastating brilliance of "Stars and Stripes for ever". In his "Letter from America" last July, Harold C. Schonberg found the *mot juste* for this piece when he called it "a kind of delirious virtuosity that may be unique in the annals of piano playing". Delirious it is, and I shall cherish it as a party record. J.N.

CHORAL AND SONG

MOZART. *Benedictus sit Deus, K.117: Exsultate, Jubilate, K.165: Vespera Solennae de Confessore, K.339.* **Erna Berger** (soprano). **Marga Höffgen** (contralto). **Horst Wilhelm** (tenor). **Ferdinand Frantz** (bass). **Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral, Berlin, and Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Karl Forster**. H.M.V. ALP1496 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Mozart composed his *Solemn Vespers of a Confessor* (no indication being given of what festival day was intended) for soloists, chorus, orchestra (strings, bassoon, two trumpets, three trombones) and organ in 1780, the last complete year of his service with the Archbishop of Salzburg, and while choosing the key of C major for the opening psalm, *Dixit Dominus*, and the concluding *Magnificat* in deference, possibly, to the Archbishop's fondness for that key, he wrote the inner movements in E flat, G, D minor, and F (the well known *Laudate Dominum* for solo soprano and chorus).

It is perhaps not easy to appreciate "the great freedom and daring of expression" spoken of in the sleeve note, in the music without a considerable knowledge of the period. One striking moment is the opening of the *Gloria*, over an organ pedal point, in the fourth psalm, *Laudate pueri*, and there are some equally striking passages in the preceding psalm *Beatus vir*, in which the solo soprano has some florid phrases to sing. The Amens are finely treated in all the psalms. The setting of *Laudate pueri* as a "learned" fugue serves to throw the serene beauty of *Laudate Dominum* into high relief. I wish I could say that Erna Berger sings her solo with all of the exquisite poise and superb *legato* that Ursula van Diemen, in the famous 78 disc, brought to it, but such performances are rarely heard. The floating high note that suddenly appears above the choral entry (during which the soprano is silent) does not quite produce the thrill Van Diemen gave us. At the same time—and especially if played with a fairly low volume of tone—Erna Berger's performance is very lovely. The fine setting of the *Magnificat* follows, and is the other highlight of the Vespers.

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Miss Berger gives us the best performance, so far, of the motet *Esultate Jubilate*, which, in view of what we have had, is not saying as much as ought to be said. Her Latin, as elsewhere, is a bit odd, and the orchestral accompaniment lacks style: the singing deserves better than this. I miss the buoyancy that Elizabeth Schumann brought to the *Alleluia*.

Mozart composed the Offertory *Benedictus sit Deus* when he was only twelve years old. It was not written, as had been supposed, for a friend who had entered the Benedictine order and was ordained, in 1769, as Father Dominic—hence the “Dominicus” Mass in C (K66)—but was composed a year earlier, and performed at the Waisenhaus Church in Vienna in 1768. The piece is constructed in the style of an Italian *Sinfonia*, with two lively outer choral movements and a middle movement for soprano solo, and in the finale Mozart makes use of one of the psalm tones as an extra theme, accompanying it with bustling violin figuration. It is a remarkable piece for a boy of twelve to have written.

What little the soloists have to do in the Vespers is done well, and if they sound too prominent that is exactly what happens in many a Viennese or Bavarian church when the singers wish to show that the Almighty has endowed them with admirable lungs! The chorus sing with full tone and great spirit, and apart from the fact that the balance allows us to hear little of the orchestra other than the violins, the recording is excellent. This is a most enjoyable disc.

A.R.

ORFF. Carmina Burana. Agnes Giebel (soprano), Marcel Cordes (baritone), Paul Kuén (tenor), Chorus of the Westdeutschen Rundfunk, Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Wolfgang Sawallisch. Chorus Master: Bernhard Zimmermann. Columbia 33CX1480 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.).

Jochum

(3/55) DG16045-6

D.G.G. have given us a very good version of this work but I think this new Columbia is even better. The sound is a little more immediate and vivid, while Sawallisch gets perhaps even more incisive results than Jochum did—not that Jochum's performance is less than excellent.

Each version has something of a blot among the soloists, the soprano on the D.G.G. disc, the baritone on Columbia's. Let me say quickly that to describe Elfride Trötschel's singing on the D.G.G. as a blot is a gross exaggeration and I withdraw it at once! But she really isn't very good in this work while Columbia's Agnes Giebel is perfectly lovely. Miss Giebel has a pure, beautifully poised voice and sings the solo *In trutina mentis dubia* really ravishingly. Incidentally, she holds that eternally-long D at the end of No. 15—how I can't imagine—where Elfride Trötschel makes no bones about stopping for a breath and starting again.

But if Columbia score with their soprano, their baritone really is a let-down. The voice itself is not of very good quality—

nothing like so good as Hans Braun's on D.G.G.: the singer makes heavy weather of high G's and of much else and, and this is the most distressing thing, his line is often so very poorly pitched and controlled. The tenors are about equal. The poor things have such an ungrateful part in this work that one can only applaud their efforts!

D.G.G. put the work on to two 10-inch discs: Columbia, more conveniently, on to a single 12-inch. The D.G.G. has bands that helpfully separate the sections of the music, which the Columbia hasn't. On the other hand I detected some slight insecurity of pitch at one place in the D.G.G. and between the end of No. 3 and the start of No. 4 there is a distinct change of pitch.

The baritone soloist prevents this new issue from being absolutely first-rate. As it is, it seems to me just better than the D.G.G. and certainly the most convenient version to have.

T.H.

ALFRED DELLER. Welcome to all the pleasures (Purcell): “Here the Deities Approve”. **Dioclesian** (Purcell): “Since from my dear Astrea's sight”. **Suite in D minor for harpsichord** (Purcell). **The Fairy Queen** (Purcell): The Plaint; Secrecy's Song; Mystery's Song. **Pavan for Viols** (Jenkins). **Fantasia in D for four Viols, 1680** (Purcell). **If ever I more riches did desire** (Purcell): “Here let my life”. **Prelude, Air and Hornpipe for Harpsichord** (Purcell). **Consort of Four Parts for Viols** (Locke). **Alfred Deller** (counter-tenor), **Leonhardt Baroque Ensemble and Consort of Viols** directed by Gustav Leonhardt (harpsichord). Vanguard PVL7047 (12 in., 39s. 11½d.).

Here is a fascinating disc of music by Purcell, Jenkins, and Locke: three musicians who contributed vastly to Britain's musical scene in the seventeenth century. Each side contains three Purcell songs and a keyboard suite. Thrown in for good measure is No. 8 of the four-part Fantasias by Purcell, one of Locke's consorts of four parts, and a Pavan by the genial and prolific Jenkins. This generous sampling of English vocal and chamber music has been available in America for over two years, and it is a great pleasure to welcome it back home at long last. The performers are all experts in the field, and Deller singing Purcell is absolutely in his element. Once or twice the songs seem to be pitched a little too low for him, so that the words “All the talents they have lent you” in the excerpt from *Welcome to all the Pleasures* get lost in the lower and less resonant part of his register. No lover of the truly delectable in vocal music, however, could resist the passionate plaint from *The Fairy Queen* or the quiet beauty of “Here let my life with as much silence slide/As Time that measures it does glide” from Cowley's *If ever I more riches did desire*. The inexorable ground bass (a simple descending scale, but how expressive!) enables Deller's voice to float buoyantly but sadly, free yet inextricably linked to the peculiar Purcellian texture that is so successfully exploited on

this record. Deller's treatment of the word “die” at the very end of “Since from my dear Astrea's sight” (from *Dioclesian*) is another wonderful example of his undisputed mastery of the pathetic vein.

Leonhardt gives a good account of the Purcell keyboard music, and his harpsichord sings nicely, ideally suited to the sauciness of the Hornpipe as well as to the more sober Allemande. His consort of viols is not quite such a success, for there is a fair proportion of those slightly sour-sounding notes which seem to be part and parcel of any consort of viols. All the same, it is good to have some music by Locke, for he is an important figure in the history of English opera, having taken part in as well as composed sections of Sir William Davenant's *The Siege of Rhodes*, which is often stated to be the first English opera. Locke's “Little Consort” was written in 1651 “at the request of Mr. William Wake, for his scholars” and was published by Playford five years afterwards. The Hon. Roger North, whose *Memoirs of Musick* are one of our chief sources of information about Jenkins, tells us that his music was “wholly devoid of fire and fury, such as the Italian music affects, in their stabs and staccatos; this defect of movement was chiefly (as it were) going up and down stairs, and had less of the sault and iterations that the Italians have”. Nevertheless it is true to say that Jenkins's vein is an entirely English one, and his little *Pavan* is a typical example of the cartloads of compositions with which he enriched the chamber music enthusiasts of seventeenth-century England.

A musical Briton of today, anxious to get to grips with the culture of his ancestors, could not do better than acquire this excellent disc; the recording is impeccable.

D.S.

PALESTRINA. Missa Papae Marcelli. Aachen Cathedral Choir conducted by Theodor B. Rehmann. D.G.G. Archive AP13032 (10 in., 30s. 11d.). Netherlands Chmbr. Chr. de Nobel

(5/56) NBL5033

(5/57) PL10020

This recording of the *Missa Papae Marcelli* has three advantages over the best of its two predecessors (Philip NBL5033); boys' voices are used on the top line, the intonations to *Gloria* and *Credo* are given out, and there is a cathedral-like acoustic. The balance is good, though the tenors are a little weak, but perhaps some might find the singing a little too brash and lacking in light and shade as compared with the Netherlands Chamber Choir. At the same time the tempi are right for this functional music and it has the feel of actual performance at a High Mass. There is a wonderful radiance of sound at the end of *Gloria* and *Credo*, and the clear, clean, attack of the trebles is a constant joy, as for example on the high G of the illustrative phrase, “descendit de caelis”, with its lovely cadence.

The conductor is perhaps a little given to clipping vowel sounds, in such words as “Domine Deus”, but in general I found this a most satisfactory performance of the marvellous music and one that is very well recorded.

A.R.

TAGLIAVINI RECITAL. Amarilli (Caccini) (a); Musica proibita (Gastaldon) (b); O del mio dolce ardor (Gluck) (a); L'heure exquise (Hahn - Stretell) (a). **Ferruccio Tagliavini** (tenor) with (a) **Ermelinda Magnetti** (piano) and (b) orchestra conducted by **Renata Cellini**. Cetra EPO0341 (7 in., 21s.).

Tagliavini gives smooth, mellifluous accounts of four "titles" well known to record collectors, though there is nothing here so strikingly beautiful or individual as to make me exclaim: "I must have this record!" Noisy surface—these were originally 78s.

A.P.

OPERATIC

BELLINI. La Sonnambula.

Count Rodolfo Nicola Zaccaria (bass)

Teresa

Fiorenza Cossotto (mezzo-sop.)

Amina

Maria Meneghini Callas (sop.)

Elvino

Nicola Monti (ten.)

Lisa

Eugenio Ratti (sop.)

Alessio

Giuseppe Morresi (bass)

A Notary

Franco Ricciardi (ten.)

Orchestra and Chorus of La Scala, Milan, conducted by Antonino Votto. Chorus Master: Norberto Mola. Columbia 33CX1469, 33CX1470-1 (five 12 in. sides, 110s. 6½d.).

Capuana (8/57) LFC1240

Many readers will have listened to *La Sonnambula* broadcast from Edinburgh, with the same Amina, Elvino and Rodolfo. The first thing to be said is that La Divina is in far better voice on this recording than she was in Scotland. There she was tired (between recording *La Sonnambula* and singing it on the stage she recorded *Manon Lescaut*, and then *Turandot*, which may perhaps have had something to do with it). The première had uneasy moments, and by the third performance, which was broadcast, almost every sustained note around about G started to crack and collapse. This does not happen in the set; there we hear the Amina which for two seasons has delighted audiences at La Scala, and very wonderful it is. The voice is not perfect. There are once or twice hints of that second note underlying and sullying the proper one. There are sharp, wobbly notes (the final one of "Come per me sereno", for example). But there is also much exquisitely beautiful singing—lovely tone, movingly tender phrasing, gloriously delicate and virtuosic moments such as at some upward arpeggios in "Sovra il sen".

I have used the words "spellbinding and sublime art" about Callas's interpretation of the role. It is very intricate, and fired by poetic intellect. I should like to quote Felice Romani, the librettist of the opera, on the subject of his heroine, for all that he says is relevant to Callas's performance: "The role of Amina" he wrote, "although it may seem at first sight easy to play, is perhaps more difficult than many others deemed more important. It calls for an actress who is playful, ingenuous and innocent, and at the same time passionate,

impetuous and affectionate; who has one cry for joy and another for sorrow, different timbres for reproof and for pleading; who displays in every movement, in every glance, every sigh, a certain stylisation mixed with realism such as we find in some paintings by Albani and certain of Theocritus' idylls".

Thus, said Romani, did Giuditta Pasta create the role... and thus does Maria Callas perform it. I need hardly point out how strikingly she colours every phrase, note and word. After a couple of playings, almost every line of recitative sticks in the mind with the exact colour and expression that she gives to it: "Compagnie, teneri amici", before "Come per me"; "Il cor soltanto", the only dowry she brings Elvino; "Qui! perchè?", filled with terror and amazement as she wakes in the Count's bedroom; "Ah! il mio anello", the cry which wrings our hearts as much as Brünnhilde's shriek, and far more affectingly, when the ring is torn from her finger. Sooner or later I shall have to brave the comparison with Pagliughi, so let me plunge in here to remark that Pagliughi sings "Qui! perchè?" with far less character, yet is touchingly beautiful all the same; but that her "Ah! il mio anello" goes for fairly little; that she is much less passionate and moving in her pleading with Elvino in the forest scene.

Pagliughi is far more the "playful, ingenuous and innocent" heroine only. I love her performance. The beautiful thread of tone, the notes dropped sweetly and truly into place, afford a kind of pleasure that Callas cannot provide. Her phrasing of "Come per me", though less intricate than Callas's, is also extremely beautiful. I can't quite define why Callas's "Ah, non credea" should strike me as less than satisfying; perhaps the timbre is too strongly coloured for the line of the music. "Ah, non giunge" is relatively unaffected because simple gaiety is not something that this soprano can easily express. Welling, interior, almost unbearable joy, yes, but not bright, clear happiness. Pagliughi is deliciously bouncy in this final aria; Callas turns it into a rather self-conscious and excessively elaborate display. The second verse can take a lot of decoration (Pagliughi sings only Bellini's notes—yet how attractively), but the embellishments must sound fresh, not, as here, laboured.

Romani also said that the singing of the role should be "at once simple and adorned, spontaneous and perfectly judged, finished but without showing the signs of study". Between them, but not separately, Callas and Pagliughi embody his perfect heroine. It is Pagliughi who has the cry for joy—every time she sings the word "gioia", which comes often, she gives it a little joyous inflection, particularly in the final "Oh gioia" of her awakening, marked by Bellini *con un piano di contento*—but Callas who has the cry for sorrow: listen to her tone as she starts the quartet "D'un pensiero" at the end of Act 1.

The concerted numbers go well in the new set, especially the two soprano/tenor

duets of Act 1, with limpid sixths in the second verse of "Prendi, l'anel" and fascinating phrasing of the lovely "Son geloso del zeffiro". Monti's voice has been stepped up a little by the engineers to sound more robust than it does in life. He is a smooth, reliable, well-tuned and tasteful singer, though a much less interesting artist than Tagliavini, whose interpretation seems more personal, and more deeply felt. Zaccaria too is reliable, though here not in the Siepi class: the divine melody of "Vi ravviso" counts for much more in the Cetra set, and Siepi shows far more imagination in his utterance of the beautiful verses which lead into it. Ratti's Lisa is delightful, and Cossotto brings a lovely firm voice to the part of Teresa, though she tends to sing too loudly. Norberto Mola's Scala choir is outstanding in the chorus describing the *fantasma*, and also in the one where the villagers creep into the Count's bedroom, only to be surprised by finding a girl asleep on the bed. The chorus which opens Act 2 would have sounded better had the important accompaniment been conducted more sensitively.

But then there are no positive virtues in Antonino Votto's conducting. He evidently has finer players under him than he had in Edinburgh—in particular a more poetical first horn (important in Elvino's "Tutto è sciolto"). But the flute is rather wretched, pedestrian in "Ah! perchè non posso odiarti" (the Cetra flautist is far more imaginative in his phrasing). On the other hand I slightly prefer the Scala oboe in the short but important interjection in "Ah, non credea". Votto's chugging accompaniment to the recitative before "Come per me" or to the introduction to Act 2, which could sound magical, seems to show that he does not prize Bellini's beautifully worked orchestral writing nearly as much as he should. The conducting on the Cetra set (Capuana) is superior.

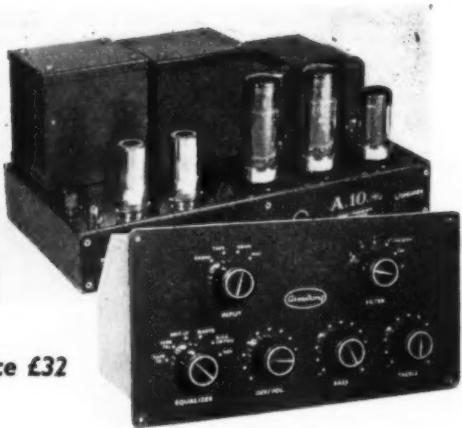
The cuts in the two sets (despite Columbia's five sides against Cetra's six) are the same: the usual ones of reprises in strettas, plus a verse of Lisa's opening cavatina (a pity, especially in the Columbia, since Ratti is so charming), a slice of Elvino's "Tutto è sciolto", Lisa's aria in the final scene, and the complete stretta ("Lisa mendace anch' essa") of the quartet, "Signor Conte!", which precedes Amina's last entry.

The Columbia is the better recording, though it is not without those "difficulties" which seem to beset many, not all, of the Scala series. It needs a little help if it is to come out smoothly all along, and sometimes Monti must be turned down to preserve a true dynamic level. The Cetra is a perfectly comfortable and acceptable recording, though narrow in range. The bass is generally weak, the chorus not always vivid (in particular, the finale to Act 1 comes off far, far better in the Columbia set), and the accompaniment to "Ah, non giunge" sounds pre-electric! The voices, on the other hand, reproduce well.

Any choice between these two sets must turn first on your opinion of Callas. There

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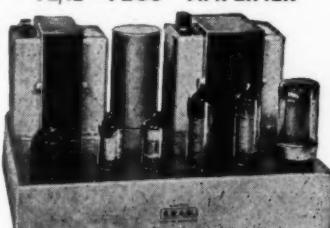
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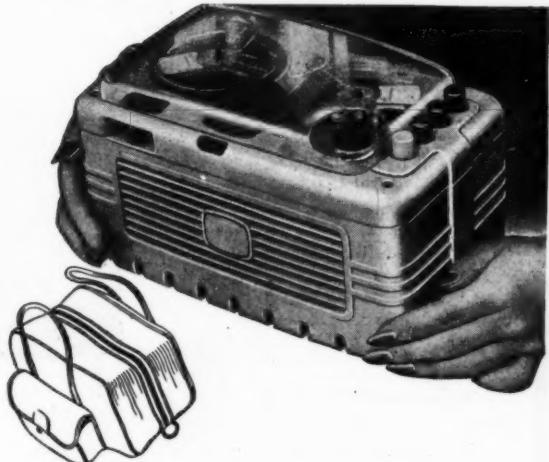
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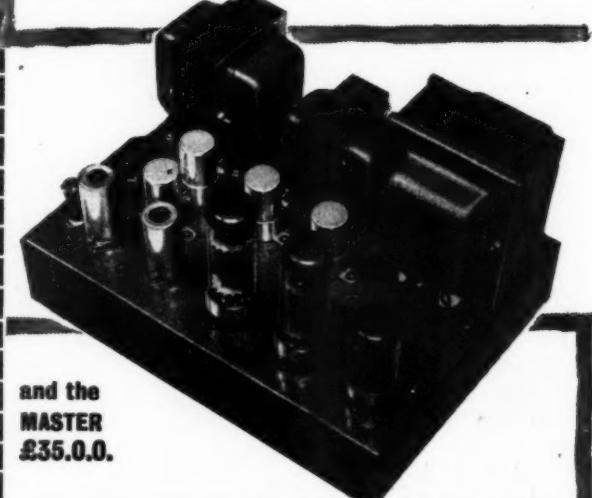
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IMPEDANCES. Input, 1 megohm. Output, 15 ohms.

HUM AND NOISE. 86db down, referred to 20 watts output.

DIMENSIONS. 12" x 9" x 6½" high (clear).

WEIGHT. 24 lbs.

is also, for U.K. readers, cost to consider. By the official British prices, the Cetra recording is over £3 more expensive than the Columbia.

A.P.

HUMPERDINCK. Hänsel und Gretel.

Peter Horst Günter (bass)
Gertrud Marianne Schech (sop.)
Hänsel Gisela Litz (mezzo-sop.)
Gretel Rita Streich (sop.)
The Witch Res Fischer (contr.)
The Sandman Elisabeth Lindermeier (sop.)
The Dew Fairy Bruno Brückmann (boy sop.)
Knabenchor des Wittelsbacher Gymnasiums, Münich, Female Chorus of the Bavarian Radio, Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. D.G.G. DGM18217-8 (two 12 in., 83s. 6d.).

Karajan

(1/54) 33CX1097-7

This new recording of Humperdinck's ever enchanting opera meets with strong competition from the Columbia issue but stands up to it well in some respects, less well in others. In the first place it is, perhaps, rather penny plain than twopence coloured. This is at once seen in the Prelude in which the trumpet entry, after the opening Prayer, makes little effect as compared with Karajan's treatment of it. Fritz Lehmann seems to aim at the utmost simplicity, but it is unfortunate that the recording diminishes even his modest points of climax: and this is particularly evident when, in the last Act, the witch is shoved into the oven by Hänsel and Gretel, and again in the "Dream Pantomime", which, frankly, sounds dull. From the point of view of orchestral sound, therefore, the Columbia recording scores all along the line.

The casting of a mezzo-soprano, as Humperdinck intended, rather than a soprano in the part of Hänsel, means that there is more differentiation of voice here than in the Columbia disc, even though Gisela Litz has a very womanly and not always well-disciplined tone. One comes to accept this as the opera continues.

Rita Streich is very well cast as Gretel, but in avoiding the archness into which Elisabeth Schwarzkopf was sometimes tempted she fails to make many points. In fact both she and Gisela Litz do not really act, vocally, in the first Act. They merely sing.

Marianne Schech manages to keep a fairly steady line as the mother and Horst Günter, with a less remarkable voice than Josef Metternich, sings well and attractively as the father. In the Columbia issue the Sandman and Dew Fairy were both sung by Anny Felbermeyer, but here the latter role is given to a boy soprano. His singing is a little jerky but the experiment is, I think, justified. Elisabeth Lindermeier does well as the Sandman but the "sh's" marked in the score should not have been omitted. Hänsel and Gretel blend well in the exquisite "Prayer" duet and Rita Streich sings her "tirelireli" solo delightfully.

That admirable artist Res Fischer is a much better witch than Columbia's Else Schürhof, really sings all of her part, instead of mouthing it, and is more sinister.

It will be seen, therefore, that this new issue has very real merits although, on balance, I still prefer the Columbia because of the livelier orchestral part and because of the vocal acting of the two principals.

A.R.

PUCCINI. Suor Angelica.

Suor Angelica Rosanna Carteri (sop.)
La Zia Principessa Miti' Truccato Pace (mezzo-sop.)
La Badessa Marta Solaro (mezzo-sop.)
Suora Zelatrice Amelita Minniti (mezzo-sop.)
Maestra delle novizie Lia Ceri (mezzo-sop.)
Suor Osmina Gilda Capozzi (sop.)
Suor Genovieffa

Wanda Strappo (sop.)
Suor Dolcina Carla Pozzi (sop.)
Suor Infermiera Lita Donati (sop.)
Orchestra Lirica and Coro di Milano of Radiotelevisione Italiana conducted by Fernando Previtali. Chorus Master: Roberto Benaglio. Cetra LPC50030 (12 in., 57s. 6d.).

Gramophiles (horrid word!) who, like me, find endless interest in browsing in W.E.R.M. (a fascinating, tantalising and appallingly time-consuming occupation), may have noticed this recording listed in the first (1950-51) supplement, and, in the absence of any other complete version of the opera, have wondered if it were ever going to become available in this country. At long last here it is, arriving, too, at a time when Sadler's Wells is staging all three operas of the Puccini triptych—so that some readers will now have had the opportunity of seeing an actual performance of *Sister Angelica*. It has never been a popular work, even among one-actors: its subject, its all-female cast (with a consequent lack of conventional romantic plot), its comparatively un-lush idiom, and the absence of extractable vocal plums have all combined to relegate it to Puccini's less-performed works. Yet, if one discounts a feeling of theatricality about the miraculous *dénouement*, the story is a simple and effective one, and there is a greater unity of musical thought in it than in many operas.

In presenting the work in recorded form, one difficulty is to select voices which are sufficiently contrasted to allow the listener to follow who is singing; and this problem has obviously been carefully considered in the present issue (save perhaps for some of the small-part characters at the beginning, who even on the stage are difficult to identify). The main burden of the work falls on the singer of the title role, and Rosanna Carteri gives a beautiful performance, with fresh, clear tone which is always steady, true intonation, and a complete absence of the "hamming" which can ruin this part. Miti' Truccato Pace, a singer virtually unknown to the British gramophone public, makes a splendidly stern and inexorable Princess; and Wanda Strappo sounds

properly *ingénue* (if a bit shrill) as Suor Genovieffa. The other parts are adequately filled: the enunciation of the chorus is the one weak spot in an otherwise very creditable performance. (Judging by the number of small noises, this was presumably a radio or television production—unless normal recording studio discipline was for some reason abandoned.) Though the recording must be seven years old at least, it is quite reasonably acceptable by modern standards—except for the surfaces, which are distressingly noisy. But at the moment we must put up with this (and with the high price) if we want *Suor Angelica* complete.

L.S.

MOZART. Idomeneo.

Idomeneo Richard Lewis (tenor)
Idamante Léopold Simoneau (tenor)
Ilia Sena Jurinac (sop.)
Electra Lucille Udovick (sop.)
Arbace James Milligan (bass-bar.)
High Priest William McAlpine

(tenor)

Voice of Neptune Hervey Alan (bass)
Glyndebourne Festival Orchestra and Chorus conducted by John Pritchard. Chorus Master: Peter Gellhorn. Produced by Carl Ebert. H.M.V. ALP1515-17 (three 12 in., 125s. 1½d.).

I feel as enthusiastic over this recording of *Idomeneo* as P.H.-W. did over that of *The Seraglio* last month (Col. 33CX1462-3). Our various reviews of Mozart opera recordings have had to be qualified in many respects in the past, so that it is a great pleasure to be able to give almost unqualified praise to these new ones in two successive months.

John Pritchard seems to me to have made great strides in his art of late and the vital and sensitive playing he gets from the orchestra (an admirable *ad hoc* body) is in evidence from the impressive overture to the end of the wonderful score. I was particularly struck by his handling of expressive passages in the accompanied recitatives and in the timing of rests: so often regarded as a mere interruption of the music instead of, paradoxical as it may seem, a part of it, and a part which can have so marked an effect. Admirable examples of both these things can be heard in Idomeneo's recitative in Act 1 (after the apparition of Neptune) beginning "O voi di Martee di Nettuno" and preceded by a short orchestral phrase for 'cello and harpsichord, in the even more expressive passage before Idomeneo sings "Tranquillo è il mar'" (one feels the stillness of the calmed sea), and in the rest of two beats before the start of the aria "Vedromni intorno l'ombra dolente". These subtleties could be endangered if the singer was a less distinguished exponent of his part than Richard Lewis, but here, and throughout, he sings with great beauty and sensitivity of tone, giving true pathos to the character of the unhappy king. I have never heard Sena Jurinac in better voice on records and her three arias, particularly "Zefiretti lusinghieri" in Act 3, are exquisitely sung, the high notes beautifully poised, the phrasing exemplary.

Ilia, unlike Idamante, is a developing character and Albert makes a good point in saying that the four *concertante* wind instruments in the exquisite accompaniment of her aria "Se il padre perdei" express what she feels "more deeply and less clearly, in contrast with what she expresses in song". Idamante's arias, written for young and inexperienced *castrato*, are less interesting, but are very satisfactorily and stylishly sung by Léopold Simoneau, and he equals Mr. Lewis's artistry in the expressive recitatives. The meeting of father and son and their gradual recognition of one another, with its terrible result (because of Idomeneo's vow), is indescribably moving.

I should add here that Mr. Lewis gives a fine performance of the great show-piece in Act 2, "Fuor del mar", and produces some well turned trills in his last aria, "Torna la pace" (Act 3).

Lucille Udovitch has the right timbre of voice for the very difficult part of Electra, and plenty of temperament behind it, but her technique is not so finished as that of the other principals, and she is only just adequate in her great outburst, calling on the Furies ("D'Oreste, d'Ajace") in the last act. But it is hard to think of a singer who has successfully accomplished this testing aria in all respects: in general, Miss Udovitch does very well.

The marvellous quartet "Andrò ramingo e solo" is well balanced, as is Idomeneo's moving prayer to Neptune, with the chorus of priests responding. William McAlpine is excellent as the High Priest, and Hervey Alan makes a great effect with the few phrases, preceded by trombone chords, given to the voice of Neptune.

All the chorus singing is good, with the solo in the lovely "Placido è il mar" well sung by an unnamed soprano, as is also the duet for two solo sopranos in the opening chorus. Care has been taken to make the far and near voices (the shipwrecked sailors and the people) effective in their chorus "Pieta! Numi!", but the thunder in the stormy portions of the score sounds a bit costive. Finally I must mention the truly lovely hushed playing of the March at Idomeneo's entry with the priests in Act 3, which presages the high emotional tension of what follows.

Much more could be written about this beautiful opera and this really grand and finely integrated performance, but, in conclusion, I must note that the sleeve carries Carl Ebert's name as producer. His hand is undoubtedly to be felt in a most successful recording, in which it is clear everyone is thoroughly familiar with what they have to do.

A.R.

"Divertimento"

The latest news of E.M.I. classical artists is now offered in a well-produced little quarterly booklet entitled, "Divertimento". The first issue, dated Autumn 1957, is now available from Record Dealers, price 6d., or directly from E.M.I. Records Ltd., 8-11 Great Castle Street, London, W.1, price 8d. post free.

SMETANA. The Bartered Bride.
 Krusina **Vekoslav Yanko** (bar.)
 Ludmila **Bogdana Stritar** (mezzo-sop.)
 Mařenka **Vilma Bukovetz** (sop.)
 Micha **Vladimir Dolnichar** (bass)
 Háta **Elza Carlovat** (mezzo-sop.)
 Vasek **Yanez Lipushchek** (tenor)
 Jenik **Miro Brajnik** (tenor)
 Kecal **Latko Koroshetz** (bass)
 Springer **Slavko Shtrukel** (tenor)
 Esmeralda **Sonia Khochevar** (sop.)
 Indian **Mirko Chernigoj** (tenor)
Chorus and Orchestra of the Slovenian National Opera, Ljubljana conducted by **Dimitri Gréb**. Philips ABL3179-81 (three 12 in., 125s. 3d.).
 Vogel (6/54) SLPV91-3

The Supraphon recording of *The Bartered Bride* is available again, smoothly pressed now on good vinylite, protected in tough Czech polythene, but still encased in envelopes of such rigidity and strength that one almost needs to learn a special technique for extracting the records safely. I cannot recommend the set too strongly, and fear that the new Philips issue is quite eclipsed by it.

This comes handsomely accompanied by a four-language libretto: Czech, and singing versions in English (Joan Cross and Eric Crozier, as used at Sadler's Wells), French and German. These four columns in themselves afford a little study in national characteristics: compare the difference in tone between: "Do come, darling one! I will teach you all you need to know", and "L'amour, cher Monsieur, sera votre guide"! Each translation amounts to an interpretation: the French one is splashed with extra little indications like *angélique*, or *l'air fatal*, or even *elle prend un air tragique et fait palpiter son sein*. The Yugoslav company from Ljubljana sings in Czech, but I feel that they too have cast a national gloss over Smetana's music.

At any rate, their *Bartered Bride* has far less life and character than the one from Prague. It is robust, strongly sung by good voices, for the most part (we know from the *Love of Three Oranges* recording what an accomplished company this is). But Smetana's music seems to run in the bloodstream of the Czech performers, and direct comparison of any number reveals an extraordinary difference. An as example, take the swaying second section of Mařenka's and Jenik's duet in the first act, "Now in happiness and sorrow". Miro Brajnik and Vilma Bukovetz merely sing it, rather well, to a pleasant accompaniment; but in the Prague set all the orchestra seems to be alive. The clarinets' sixths, *dolce amoroso*, share in the lovers' contentment; the second violin figure plays an alert and fascinating part. Ivo Zidek caresses his opening phrase (and incidentally gives full value to E flats which the Yugoslav tenor suggests rather than sings).

The Ljubljana orchestra is rather disappointing all through, notably in the accompaniment to Kecal's recital of Vasek's diverse virtues, where its commentary is so

important. This is partly the fault of a recording which, especially in the earlier sides, is not very clear and has poor "separation", but largely the result simply of less idiomatic and pointed playing. The Circus March, however, comes off extremely well. Bukovetz as Mařenka cannot rival Musilová; nor Brajnik, as Jenik, despite free, pleasant tone, Zidek; nor Koroshetz, as Kecal, Karel Kalas, for none of them puts nearly so much character and expression into the singing as their Czech counterparts. The two mums are less well-tuned than they should be for us to enjoy the Sextet in security. The two Ringmasters epitomize the difference between the performances: the Yugoslav performer merely delivers his music; the Czech one has so highly personal and eccentric an utterance that, even without understanding a word of the language, we can enjoy the rich character-drawing. The chorus has been recorded with too much resonance and a slight metallic edge. They do not sound bouncy, or really gay, in the opening scene.

Boosey & Hawkes now stock the Artia full score of the opera, in a convenient size (10 in. by 8 in.), strongly bound, and costing 88s. 6d. This can enormously increase our pleasure in listening, and deepen our affection for the masterpiece. The same firm has a vocal score, bound, at 42s. A.P.

VERDI. Un Ballo in Maschera.

Riccardo

Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor)
Renato **Tito Gobbi** (bar.)
Amelia **Maria Meneghini Callas** (sop.)
 Ulrica **Fedora Barbieri** (mezzo-sop.)
 Oscar **Eugenio Ratti** (sop.)
 Silvano **Ezio Giordano** (bar.)
 Samuel **Silvio Maionica** (bass)
 Tom **Nicola Zaccaria** (bass)
 Un Giudice **Renato Ercolani** (tenor)
 Un Servo **Renato Ercolani** (tenor)
Orchestra and Chorus of La Scala, Milan, conducted by **Antonino Votto**.
 Chorus Master: **Norberto Mola**.
 Columbia 33CX1472-4 (three 12 in., 125s. 14d.).
 Toscanini (9/55) ALP12524
 Maghini (6/57) LPC1250

This is very well recorded, with full rich orchestral tone and admirable clarity even in the biggest ensembles. Antonino Votto seems more at home here than he does in *La Sonnambula*. Much of the playing is spirited. Some of the tempi strike one as seeming slower than we are accustomed to, but find justification in the metronome markings of the score. (Toscanini's tempi in this piece, for that matter, also seem slower than usual sometimes.) Here and there Votto fails us—in "Eri tu", for example, where he doesn't hold the tempo and return to the resolute forcefulness of the opening, after Gobbi's expressive slowing-down for certain phrases.

Callas brings all her dramatic power and imagination to the role of Amelia, but I find her tone monotonous. It is constantly plangent, and rather bitter. The dolent timbre is effective in "Morrò, ma prima in grazia" (though the last note wobbles),

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but there is no gentle tenderness, no floating beauty of sound, to afford contrast. She is very fine in the *sotto voce* warnings to Riccardo in the last scene. Barbieri is in good voice, but also monotonous, and undramatic. No one who was not following the words would realise at what point she suddenly refuses to read Riccardo's fortune any further. Gobbi's Renato is impressive, Eugenia Ratti is an elegantly minx-like Oscar (no cadenza in "Saper vorreste"); Sam and Tom are good.

Di Stefano, as Mr. Schonberg noted last June, finds the role of Riccardo very congenial, and though he is sometimes too loud, he is affecting in the big lyrical outbursts, makes a striking effect by observing Verdi's *pp* in the Barcarolla, and sings "E scherzo od è follia" with airy grace and well-managed laughter in the voice. He shows insensitivity by opening out on the last syllable, the F, of the swaying "Non sai tu che se l'anima mia" in the love duet; neither he nor Callas caresses the phrases of this section in the tender way that John Vickers and Amy Shuard do at Covent Garden, though the big climax at "Ebben... sì, t'amo" is very exciting.

If Cetra prices ever drop back into line with those of other companies, I think the Cetra set could offer very serious competition. (As it is, it already costs ten shillings less, being on two discs instead of three.) Tagliavini is a more stylish and elegant and interesting Riccardo than either Di Stefano or Peerce; Valdengo is the most imaginative and lyrical of the three baritones (though his intonation is sometimes bothersome); and I think P. H.-W. was rather unchivalrous to Mary Curtis, the Cetra Amelia. In quite a few phrases, with her pure, well-supported stream of tone (rather like Eleanor Steber's, both in sound and in the style in which she uses it), she actually gives me more pleasure than does Callas, Nelli, or Milanov in the one-disc "highlight" *Ballo* (which incidentally does not come from a complete recording). Nelli is also pure, but shows less character in her singing. One should, however, add a warning that Miss Curtis goes out of tune occasionally—though not disastrously, nor for long. My Cetra pressings evidently sound far better than P. H.-W.'s; I would describe it as a fairly good recording.

The Toscanini set for H.M.V. comes up with all the vigour and vitality that one always finds when going back to his recordings after listening to others. P. H.-W. praised it highly, and I think that, if I were allowed to take only one *Ballo* with me to my desert island, it would be Toscanini's. But I don't want to suggest that the new Columbia is less than a very enjoyable performance; whole-hearted Callas enthusiasts will no doubt head for it at once, and be delighted.

A very slight grumble at E.M.I.'s engineers for audible tape-joins, both here and in *La Sonnambula* (e.g. in "Ah, che fulgor"); before the last phrase of Di Stefano's "Ma se m'è forza perdeti"; and in the other opera, just before Callas's "Il cor soltanto"). They are very slight. A.P.

VERDI. La Forza del Destino: Act 3, Scenes 1 and 2; Conclusion Act 4, Scene 1. **Franco Corelli** (tenor), **Gian Giacomo Guelfi** (baritone), **Chorus and Orchestra of Turin Radio** conducted by **Arturo Basile**. Cetra LPC55017 (12 in., 57s. 6d.).

This disc was presumably made before Franco Corelli had achieved international fame, for he does not dwell unduly on his high notes or indulge in the "orgy of athletic bellowing" of which, as Polione in *Norma*, he is accused by the Paris correspondent in the September number of *Opera*.

In the recitative preceding the aria "O tu che in seno agli angeli" he is apt to squirm about but he settles down after that and often sings some lovely phrases that show his potentialities as an artist. I cannot get good reproduction on some of his high notes, which distort on my machine, but there is no question that this is a splendid voice and one can only hope that Corelli does not allow his sensational success to spoil him and ruin his voice. In the key passage of the duet "Solenne in quest'ora" he sings a soft high note, not too prolonged, that is not out of keeping, within operatic convention, with the state of an apparently dying man, and he rations his sobs.

Guelfi is absolutely magnificent in "Urna fatale del mio destin!" and both artists give us the authentic thrill in the wonderful duet from the Fourth Act. The recording is adequate, and lovers of Italian opera will find this an exciting disc. A.R.

VERDI. Otello: "Era la notte" and "Si pel ciel"; **Credo**; "Ora e per sempre addio". **Giuseppe Taddei** (baritone), **Carlo Guichandut** (tenor), **Symphony Orchestra of Radiotelevisione Italiana**, Turin, conducted by **Franco Capuana**. Cetra EPO0336 (7 in., 21s.).

These three extracts from an apparently complete recording of the second act taken (to judge by the hollow acoustic) from a stage performance (though, if there was an audience, it managed to keep preternaturally silent) whet our appetite for more. For, although the recording and balance leave a great deal to be desired—they are perhaps least satisfactory in the *Credo*, where at "Vien dopo tanta irision la morte" the singer is well off the mike, and in the following outburst in G flat we hear nothing but the brass triplets—there is a genuine atmosphere of a *performance* (as distinct from a studio recording) about it all, and the two artists here show a musicality which is unfortunately none too common. Taddei makes an admirable Iago, with finely graded tonal colorations, and Guichandut, whom I do not remember having heard on records before, is a tenor well worth noting, though he tends to tighten a little on his top notes. It is a pity that the disc surfaces are not quieter; but I doubt whether they will put off enthusiasts for the best kind of Italian opera singing. L.S.

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WAGNER. Lohengrin: Bridal Chorus. **Tannhäuser:** Pilgrim's Chorus. **Chorus and Symphony Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio** conducted by **Fritz Lehmann**. D.G.G. EPL30085 (7 in., 16s. 8*1/2*d.).

Any artist will tell you that one of the trickiest things in the world is to perform a hackneyed work: the effort (supposing that it is made at all, of course) of seeing it afresh, getting rid of the accretions and associations which have collected on it like barnacles, can so easily lead to a self-consciously mannered or obtrusively neutral interpretation. All credit, then, to Fritz Lehmann, who gives us most artistically shaped and refined performances of these two ultra-familiar choruses, which emerge from under his baton as spontaneously sounding as if they were entirely new. The deliberate tempi, too, jerk our attention back from the usual facile readings to the authentic Wagnerian stage atmosphere. The chorus sings with firm, assured tone (though, if one is hypercritical, the male chorus of pilgrims isn't *dead* true in its chording when unaccompanied); and the recording is altogether excellent. This little disc deserves, and I hope will find, a welcome.

L.S.

AN EVENING AT THE LYRIC OPERA.

Samson et Dalila (Saint-Saëns): "Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix" (a). **Eugene Onegin** (Tchaikovsky): Tatiana's Letter Scene (b). **Cavalleria Rusticana** (Mascagni): "Voi lo sapete" (a). **Le Nozze di Figaro** (Mozart): "Voi che sapete" (a). **Andrea Chénier** (Giordano): "Nemico della patria" (c). **Mefistofele** (Boito): "L'altra notte" (b). **La Gioconda** (Ponchielli): "L'amo come il fulgor" (a and b). (a) **Giulietta Simionato** (mezzo-soprano), (b) **Renata Tebaldi** (soprano), (c) **Ettore Bastianini** (baritone), **Orchestra of the Chicago Lyric Opera** conducted by **Georg Solti**. Decca LXT5326 (12 in., 39s. 11*1/2*d.).

This is a recording—applause and all, I fear—made during a Grand Opera Concert in the Chicago Opera House. Simionato is the chief performer, voluptuous in "S'apre per te il mio cor" (she sings it in Italian), attractively non-squally in "Voi lo sapete", and agreeable though not particularly pointful in "Voi che sapete". Tebaldi's glorious tones hold an exciting note of passion in Tatiana's Letter Scene (also done in Italian, by the way), and she lightens her voice quite successfully for Margherita's exquisite, fragile lament—though the final flutter of coloratura is over-beefy. The "anything you can do . . ." duet from *Gioconda* comes off well, though neither lady gives out the note of authentic malice that in the Cigna/Elmo version sent the two voices skittering into a wild and uproarious tangle. I found Bastianini's single contribution, the *Andrea Chénier* baritone monologue declaimed with fervour and splendid tone, the most impressive item of all. The recording is very good.

A.P.

WAGNER. Lohengrin: "In fernem Land": "Mein lieber Schwan".
Wolfgang Windgassen (tenor),
Radio Symphony Orchestra of Berlin conducted by **Richard Kraus**.
 D.G.G. EPL30261 (7 in., 16s. 8½d.).

Windgassen again shows himself one of the more sensitive and sympathetic helden-tenors, never content merely to rant and bellow. His two big set-pieces in *Lohengrin* are sung with dignity and taste, and with a good sense of climax. In the Narration he takes a little time to warm up—his voice sounds a bit tired at first, though this may be the recording, which is less satisfactory than in the other extract. As interpretations, I prefer these to the recording of the same extracts by Rudolf Schock on H.M.V. 7ER5031, though the latter have the dramatic advantage of going on in each case to the ensuing chorus (the Farewell, indeed, to the end of the opera). L.S.

POETRY AND DICTION ETC.

CAMBRIDGE ANTHOLOGY OF ENGLISH PROSE. *Malory to Donne 1485-1640*: *Burton to Johnson 1621-1781*: *Defoe to Burke 1722-1790*: *Austen to Bronte 1816-1853*: *Dickens to Butler 1863-1903*. Argo RG103-7 (five 12 in., £10.8s. 6½d.).

(Originally recorded at Cambridge by members of the University under the direction of George Rylands, Fellow of King's College. The Argo records were made from tapes supplied by the British Council. The extracts are published in book form by the Cambridge University Press, price 6s. paper bound or 12s. 6d. cloth bound. They are edited by Eirian James with a commentary).

This "pageant of prose" requires a cast of experienced actors if it is to hold the attention for more than a few minutes. One feels that it has been done on the cheap: except done well, it is better not attempted. The "members of the University" never stood a chance of making such a difficult project a success. No doubt they know a great deal, academically, about the extracts they are reading: but they require more than that: they need the matured gifts of the actor to bring them to life. Their voices are so similar in pitch and style that it is painfully tedious to listen to more than one extract at a time—and the whole anthology must take about four hours! Wherever these tapes were played abroad, English prose must have suffered a loss of prestige. If they had been my introduction to English literature, the sight of an English classic would fill me with weariness.

"The styles and rhythms of English can vary fully as much in prose as in poetry. This anthology is meant to enchant the listener with the best of English prose and to illustrate the ways in which each great writer has bent the language to his will." So it says on the enticing record covers: and it would have been a noteworthy achievement to have fulfilled this intention. Unfortunately the readers have bent the language to their will: they have in fact completely flattened it out. The monotony

of tempo, the absence of variation in pitch, reduces all the styles and rhythms to those of contemporary Cambridge speech. The studied elocution does make it easy to follow the words, but spirit and feeling are lost and so is "meaning" in the fullest sense. Even argumentative prose must be read with something of the excitement of following the argument to its conclusion. But the extracts from Bacon and Sir Thomas More are used as pretexts for the readers to show off their voices, as if they were being auditioned for Third Programme announcers.

Each of these extracts requires casting like a character in a play. The wit of Meredith has something of the sophistication of University talk: so the extract from the "Egoist" is read to some extent in harmony with the style. But the robust Elizabethans like Dekker and Donne require a different interpretation. In the chosen pieces they are morbidly and rhetorically revelling in the horror of death; the readers make them sound like refined Civil Servants describing a visit to an *abattoir*. Vocal acting of the highest order is needed to recreate in sound the imaginative writing of the past: and a variety of voices is essential. Such a cast would be admittedly an expense. But these records have neither educational nor entertainment value—if, indeed, the one can exist without the other. To skimp the job renders a disservice to our past.

Miss James's selections are not to blame: they are typical of the best-known authors of their periods: anything more adventurous would not have suited the object of the British Council. Each passage is as complete in itself as anyone is likely to find and usually has some dramatic quality. Miss James's task was within her grasp and

she has accomplished it: the readers' was beyond their accomplishments.

ROBERT WALLER.

(*Robert Waller was Senior Talks Producer in the West Region of the B.B.C. until April of this year. He has published a novel and a book of poems. He is now working as a free lance.*)

ANNA RUSSELL IN DARKEST AFRICA.

Hamletto (or Prosciuttino). Backwards with the Folk Song. How to Enjoy Your Bagpipe. **Anna Russell** (comediennne). Philips BBL 7174 (12 in., 37s. 6d.). Recorded at the Johannesburg Music Festival.

This artist is described on the sleeve as "International Concert Comedienne, Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Baritone, and Autriculatrix Extraordinary", all of which she certainly is. The material, recorded at the Johannesburg Music Festival, consists of "Hamletto, or Prosciuttino (Russell-Verdi)", the point of the Italian word (made into a diminutive by the inventive Anna) being that it means "little ham": "Backwards with the Folk Song", the items being "A lily maid sat making moan", "Old Mother Slipper Slopper", "Ricky-Ticky", "I'm sittin' in the bar all alone" and "Jolly old Sigmund Freud": "How to enjoy your bagpipe" from the series "Wind instruments I have known".

This last number is riotously funny and much the best thing on the disc. The artist is almost always better than her material, some of which—particularly in "Hamletto", is poor but all of which is rapturously received by an audience out to enjoy itself.

The mixture of Italian-English (Padre-ghost, for example) is often amusing, but



The Anna Russell disc reviewed on this page was first issued in South Africa by The Gramophone Record Co. of Johannesburg, who recorded it before an audience of 2,000 people in the Witwatersrand University. The illustration shows Miss Russell posing for the cover photograph which accompanied the South African release.

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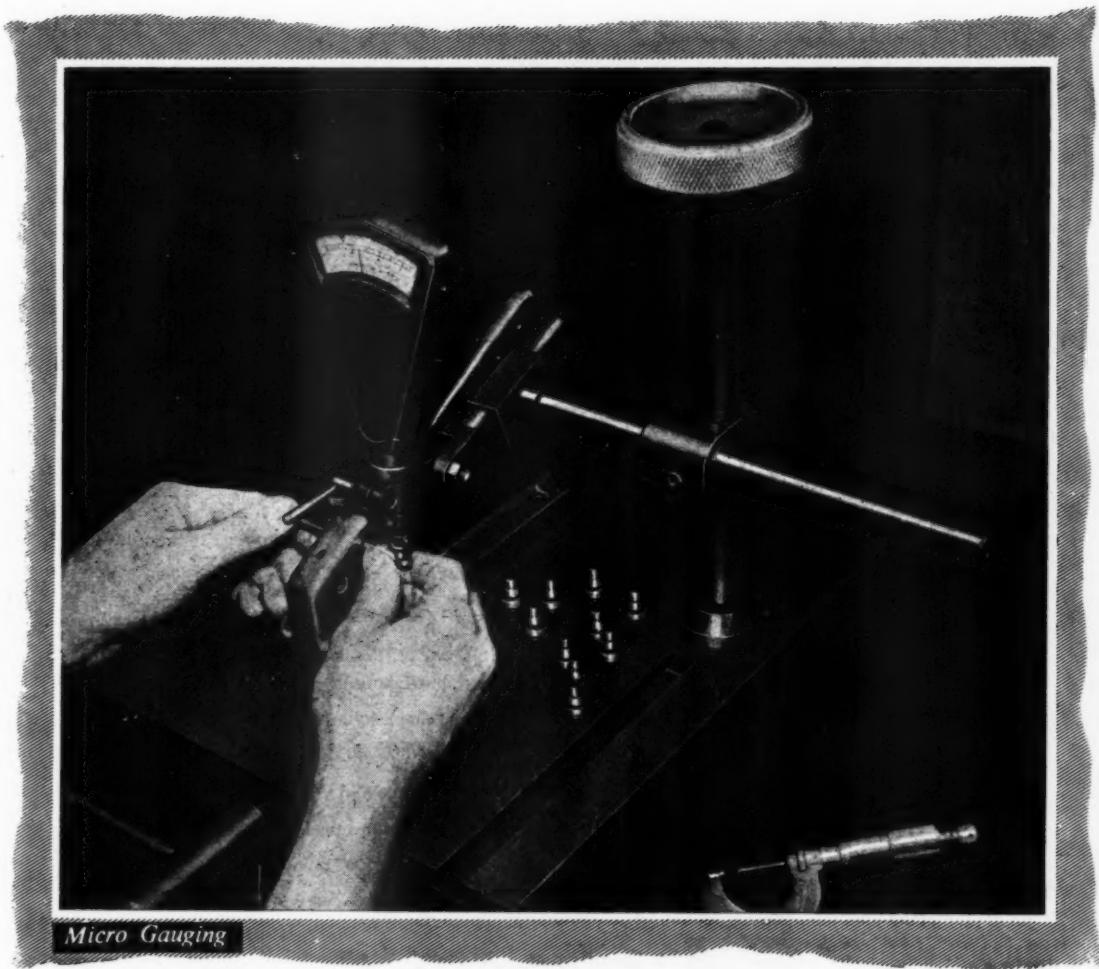
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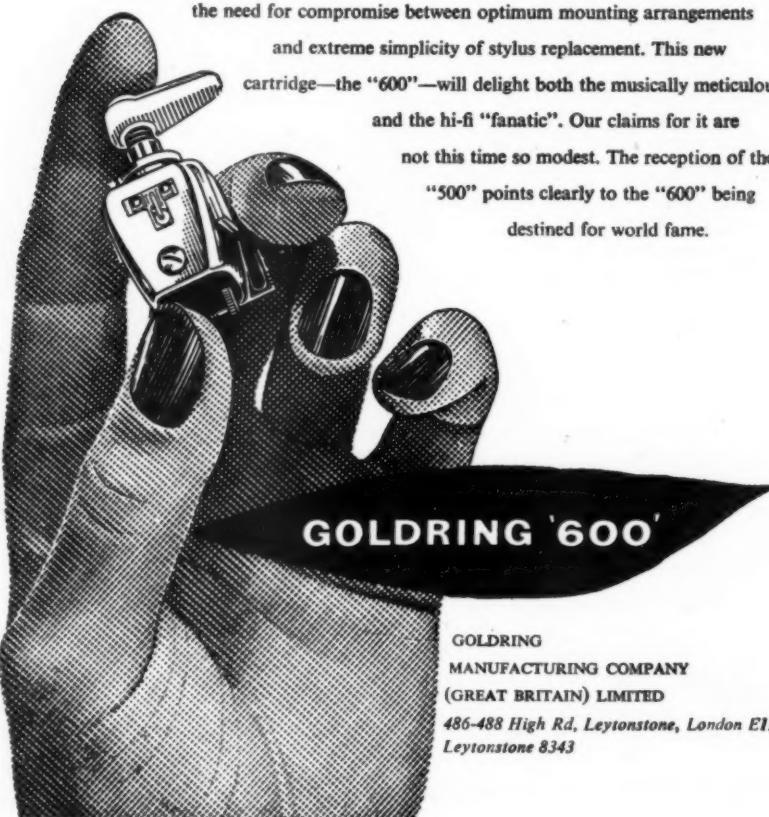
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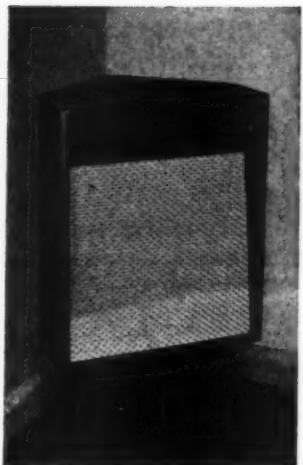
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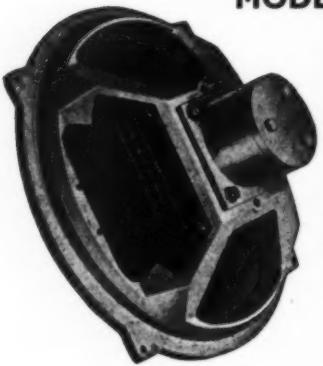
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there are too few real caricatures of Verdi's style. The best is a *Trio*, cleverly done.

One is inclined to react against gales of laughter after some quite commonplace jokes but then one cannot see the expressive Russell face and that is a deprivation. Her articulation and sense of timing are as good as ever. There are some very entertaining moments in the Folk-song number and undoubtedly this is a disc Russell fans will lap up even though much of it is not of her best.

A.R.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

BEETHOVEN. Piano Concertos: No. 1 in C major, Op. 15 (a) (COLH 1) ; No. 2 in B flat major, Op. 19 (b) (COLHS2) ; No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37 (c) (COLH 3). Artur Schnabel (piano) with (a) London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent (b & c) Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. H.M.V. COLH 1, COLHS 2 (single sided), COLH3 12 in., 41s. 8½d. each, single sided 12 in., 27s. 1½d.). Recording dates: (a) March 23rd, 1932, (b) June 6th, 1946, (c) May 30th & 31st, 1947.

These are the first three of the complete Schnabel Beethoven Piano Concertos which are to be issued. They are admirably presented, each in a stout cardboard container of plain and dignified design (what a relief, one realises, not to have, for once, the usual gaudy sleeve) and each with its own accompanying booklet. Each of these, besides a revealing photograph, gives precise details of the work and its first performance, of the origins of the present recording, an appropriate short article (for example, "Concerts in Vienna, 1741-1800") and a very full analysis of the work: also a note on Schnabel himself. For all this there is no increase in price and H.M.V. deserve much credit for the way they have produced these great performances of the past.

You will note that the recording of the First Concerto is of much earlier date than the others. It sounds like it but if the quality of the orchestral reproduction is no great shakes, the piano is remarkably good and that, after all, is what matters in an issue where the emphasis is on the pianist.

The recording and performance of the Second Concerto I thought the greatest all-round success and I would recommend this if you are thinking of buying only one of these records. Here is Schnabel's greatness shown as much in the way he gets behind the music of the slow movement as in the scintillating brilliance of the finale, the exuberance with which he played all quick movements.

This record of the Third Concerto was apparently never issued and it is tempting to guess why. It is certainly the least satisfactory of the present set, even though the piano tone is again excellent and much of the playing superb—but not all the playing. Was it for technical reasons that the issue was withheld? There is an insistent

click at the end of the first movement. There seems, too, to be some variability of recorded sound—though it is easy to imagine that when you know you are listening to a refurbished disc. These things apart, there is one bad join, the only one noticeable in all these three concertos: the slow movement has a bar—bar 37—that is considerably shortened.

This one disc, then, is a little disappointing. It is still of very great interest and the whole venture deserves the greatest support. These are performances by a really great artist which should indeed be readily available to all.

T.H.

HAYDN. Trio No. 1 in G major, Op. 73, No. 2 (a)

SCHUBERT. Trio No. 1 in B flat major, Op. 99 (b). Alfred Cortot (piano), Jacques Thibaud (violin), Pablo Casals ('cello). H.M.V. COLH 12 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.). Recording dates: (a) June 20th, 1927, (b) July 6th, 1926.

The *Great Recordings of the Centuries* series, which promises to be most exciting, has been well planned, on the evidence of the above disc. It is contained in a blue linen case (or some synthetic substance resembling linen) with a gold label giving the details and accompanied by a booklet containing not only notes on the works with musical illustrations, but also delightful contributions by Cortot and Casals. The latter says: "There was no sense of permanency in (our trio) as a chamber music ensemble. We were simply three friends who were all very busy but felt, nevertheless, an urgent need to be together, and above all to make music together. We decided to form a trio and devote to it a few weeks every year". Cortot writes at greater length and in the course of his moving account of "three men all equally in love with their art and also united by the bonds of a brotherly affection" vouches for the fact that "nothing was done by means of premeditated discipline to modify our playing", at these times of meeting, "and each of us retained the privileges of his individual conception of any given work". Cortot pays tribute to the glorious career of Jacques Thibaud, who lost his life in an air crash in September, 1953.

As I put the disc on my machine I wondered if the playing would sound as wonderful as I remembered it. It does indeed. The three artists swing buoyantly into the start of the Schubert Trio, their sharing of the second tune in the movement is as perfect as memory held it, the first recapitulation of the Rondo theme is as beautifully achieved—and a hundred other things. And so with the Haydn, in which the pianist has the lion's share, but never takes advantage of it. The Rondo is marvellously played. The sheer love of music making amongst friends could not be more convincingly demonstrated than on this disc. The transfers have been very skilfully done and surface noise eliminated. The violin tone is occasionally a little harsh, the piano rather distant and without the lustre later recording processes gave it;

and though only a year separates the two recording dates the Haydn is much brighter and more forward in tone. There is no doubt as to the success of the undertaking and one rejoices in it. I look forward eagerly to hearing the other issues in this notable series.

A.R.

BACH. Brandenburg Concertos. No. 1 in F major ; No. 2 in F major ; No. 6 in B flat (COLC 13). No. 3 in G major ; No. 4 in G major ; No. 5 in D major (COLC 14.) **Adolf Busch Chamber Orchestra** conducted by **Adolf Busch**. Columbia COLC 13-14 (12 in., 41s. 8½d. each). Recording date : October, 1935.

It is good to see that Columbia are issuing in England some of the records made in the series *Les Gravures Illustres*, an E.M.I. International venture which aims to bring within the LP collectors' reach, some of the greatest performances on 78s. For those readers who treasure the sound of those old and hallowed Busch performances, or who remember their chamber concerts in pre-war London, these discs will be quite indispensable.

One hears nowadays of complete cycles of Bach's orchestral works being played in public concerts. But this would not have been possible had it not been for the solid pioneering work of Adolf Busch and his Chamber Orchestra, which included English, French and German instrumentalists of the highest calibre. Busch, a pupil of Bram Eldering, was a violinist of the old school, and though his idiosyncratic scoops were out of date even a quarter of a century ago, and his position change could scarcely be compared to the sleek manumatic transmission of his younger contemporaries, his playing had a charm of its own, and apart from a sweet tone (never cloying) and a noble bow-arm he had real style—the kind of style that cannot now be found anywhere. It died with him, but the many who admire it can hear, almost as freshly as if recorded in the last five years, these splendid transfers made last year in Paris. The orchestral texture is remarkably clear, and the tempi (it need hardly be said) are all intelligently and sensitively musical. I warmly recommend these records.

D.S.

MUSIC FROM THE SYNAGOGUE.

L'cho Dodi (Sulzer) ; V'hogein Ba'adeinu (Lewandowsky) ; V'shomru (Linhard) ; Mo'oz Tsur (Trad.) ; Sh'ma Yisroel (Sulzer) ; Adoshem Adoshem (Sulzer) ; Y'hil Rotson (Alter) ; Ya'aleh (Alter) ; Adon Olom (Sulzer). **Cantor Israel Alter**, with choir, and **Paul Mania** (organ). Conducted by **Leo Kopf**. Parlophone CPM5 (12 in., 41s. 8½d.). Available to Special Order only.

Before the war there were many recordings of Synagogal Music available, but these have gradually disappeared from the catalogues. However, over the past few months, the position has improved slightly for some new recordings have been issued,

but the disc at present under review is even more welcome in that it assembles a number of the records made by Israel Alter at his prime in the mid-twenties.

The era of the virtuoso Chazan (or Cantor) whose florid and extemporary rendering of the synagogue service brought comfort and spiritual satisfaction to his congregation is rapidly drawing to a close for the social conditions which nurtured this style of Chazanuth has, with the wholesale destruction of the Jewish communities in Europe during the last war, ceased to exist. The value of this record can be compared with the recently issued *Golden Treasury of Immortal Performances* in the field of opera, preserving for generations yet to come the art and techniques of the great singers of the past. Having shown that it is possible to reissue such records, we now look to the gramophone companies to repeat the venture with the long deleted recordings by such renowned cantors as Sirota, Hershman, Rosenblatt, Kwartin and the Kusevitsky brothers.

Considering the age of these recordings—they were made in 1926—the transcriptions have been remarkably well done and show to advantage the rich tenor voice of Cantor Israel Alter. On this disc are presented nine items in the tradition of the synagogue music of Western Europe. As opposed to the freer and more ornate compositions from Eastern Europe, this style tends towards that of the Anthem, with a more stately and simpler vocal line. The originator of the form was Salomon Sulzer, Cantor in Vienna a hundred years ago, followed by Louis Lewandowsky in Berlin a few years later and their innovations still greatly influence modern synagogue music. Five of their compositions are included on this record and the two by Alter himself show that he also follows in the same path. The other two items are in the same style.

The record sleeve contains a short biographical note on Alter, who at the age of 56 is at present cantor at the Great Synagogue in Johannesburg. An English translation of each piece is given and the page numbers helpfully added refer (although this is not mentioned) to the "Singers" Authorised Daily Prayer Book.

J. F. ROTH.

WINSTON CHURCHILL. I Can Hear It Now. Edited by Edward R. Murrow and Fred W. Friendly. Narrated by Edward R. Murrow. Authorised by the Rt. Hon. Sir Winston Churchill, K.G., O.M., C.H., F.R.S. Philips SPL100 (12 in., 41s. 9d.).

The only reason I can imagine why the Editor sent me this record for review is that the room in which I listen to records was once Mr. Churchill's study! This may not be a very good reason but all the same I was delighted to have the opportunity of listening to this most fascinating anthology of extracts from speeches that range from 1909, when Churchill was a Liberal—I wonder how that was preserved?—to recent years. It is all admirably presented, not least because the amount of presentation, by Edward R. Murrow, is kept to a mini-

mum. The stage is left for the chief actor to speak for himself. And what evocative speaking it is!

There is so much here that brings back so many memories to all of us who lived through the last war—almost every extract made me recall personal memories of the time I first heard it. How many remarkable passages we have forgotten, too. Do you remember the magnificent scorn heaped on Hitler ("that bloodthirsty guttersnipe") and on Mussolini ("that Italian jackanapes") and how it heartened us at the time? The record never gets tedious, so wide is the range of style, so widespread are the places from which he spoke, the occasions of each speech. What chuckles some of his remarks raise, too. We all remember "some chicken, some neck" but probably most will not know of the slogan Churchill coined for the election campaign of an American, Al Smith—"All for Al, and Al for All".

The record includes brief extracts of the voices of Chamberlain (from his 1940 speech of resignation), Roosevelt (Pearl Harbour) and Eisenhower (D Day). The only pity is that the National Anthem, played in full after Churchill's valediction to King George VI, was apparently recorded across the Atlantic, a horrible sound. It would have been so easy to have substituted for this issue a good recording and it would not have spoilt the authenticity of the occasion.

T.H.

(I might add that since writing the above I have played the record to two visitors who are too young to remember the speeches when they were made: one, indeed, had never heard Churchill's voice. The impact on them was astonishing and the record moved them deeply, as it does me.—T.H.).

CLASSICAL REISSUES

Orchestral

Haydn's Symphony No. 93 in D major, missing altogether since its deletion from the Columbia catalogue, becomes available again in a valuable Philips reissue (NBL5037). It is backed with the *Surprise* Symphony, No. 94 in G; and both performances, by Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic, are in the very first class. Both recordings too, are good, though that of the *Surprise* is a little less full than that of the other symphony. Nevertheless, I would choose this version of the *Surprise* from all those at present on the market; and the 93rd is indeed lucky that its solitary representation in the catalogues should be such a good one.

M.M.

It is irrational, but humanly understandable, I think, that Furtwängler's performance of Schubert's Great C major Symphony should seem a far more attractive proposition (even leaving the question of cost aside) when laid out on two LP sides instead of three. This great conductor had the reputation of being slow, and there was something rather daunting in the prospect of three sides ahead. But, as M.M. remarked when reviewing the original issue (D.G.G. DGM18015-6, with Haydn's

Symphony No. 88 in G on the fourth side; March, 1955), "the leisureliness is one to be established by a stop-watch, not one to be consciously endured while listening—then the nobility prevails completely". Well, this glorious performance has now been fitted within the bounds of a single disc, DGM18347, and has lost nothing in recording quality; it still sounds superb. The only drawback is a break across the slow movement. The silent bar (250) no doubt seemed the obvious place to make a turn-over—but since this bar is a dramatic pause, which makes its point by delaying for just the right length of time the subsequent soft entry, the place is not in effect happily chosen.

Two Dvořák records have become available again from Supraphon, a 10-inch coupling of the fine *Othello* Overture (the last panel of the *Nature, Life and Love*—or *In Nature's Realm, Carnival and Othello*—tritych of overtures), and *The Midday Witch*, an alarming tale told in delightful music. This recommended disc, LPM22, is made by the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra under Václav Talich. Dvořák's Piano Concerto, with the same orchestra and conductor and František Maxián as soloist, is not well enough recorded, even in this new issue, to have confident recommendation, though it is a beautiful performance. Mr. Maxián uses Vilem Kurz's revision of the solo part; so does Firkusny in a (slightly abridged) 10-inch version for Philips—not too well recorded, though slightly better than the Supraphon (LPV70). T.H., in October 1956, surmised that Wührer stuck to Dvořák's original; I have not heard this Vox disc, which is his first choice. Readers may be interested to obtain from Messrs. Boosey & Hawkes the new Artia miniature score of the Concerto, which prints both forms of the solo part on parallel staves.

Philips have an attractive 45 of three Mozart Overtures with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra and Bruno Walter (ABE10013). Walter's *Zauberflöte* Overture would be my first choice now. Its quality shows especially in the contrast with another new 45 version, that of Fritz Lehmann with the Berlin Philharmonic (D.G.G. EPL30022). Walter brings grave majesty to the introduction, and accents the subsequent Allegro so that each new entry drives the music forwards on its way. Lehmann shows less sense of tension in the opening, and his Allegro sounds tame and undervalued by comparison. Moreover, the pitch of the D.G.G. is not quite steady at the start. Walter offers on the other side the *Cosi* and *Schauspiel-direktor* Overtures, in an excellent recording free of the pre-echoes which T.H. noted in the 12-inch edition. Lehmann's coupling is the *Don Giovanni* Overture. The D.G.G. has a far more suitable cover-design, and also provides an inner wrapping for the record.

Decca have detached Massenet's pretty *Scènes Pittoresques* from his even prettier *Scènes Alsaciennes*, and presented them on a separate MP, LW5305 (Paris Conservatoire Orchestra under Albert Wolff). The rest is standard fare, and can be listed

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briefly: Kodály's *Dances of Galanta* (London Philharmonic/Basil Cameron; H.M.V. TEP7045); Vaughan Williams's *Wasps* Overture and *Greensleeves* Fantasia (Hallé/Barbirolli; H.M.V. 7ER5082); Elgar's first two *Pomp and Circumstance* Marches, No. 1 being the one with "Land of Hope and Glory" (London Philharmonic/Boult; H.M.V. 7EB6026); Tchaikovsky's *Capriccio Italien* (Munich Philharmonic/Lehmann; D.G.G. EPL30069).

Plano

The "Moonlight" Sonata as an EP ought to make a best-seller. It makes its débüt in this format on two different records, neither of them an obvious first choice. Iturbi (Columbia SEB3513) is plain and uninteresting. Kempff (D.G.G. EPL 30072) offers a beautifully serene first movement, but a slightly prim and awkward Allegretto, and a tame, jogtrot finale.

Vocal

The most interesting disc is the revival of Supraphon LPM125, extracts from Fibich's opera, *The Bride of Messina*. P.H.W. reviewed this originally in September 1954. No soloists are named, but from WERM III we learn that they are our old friends Marta Krasová, as Isabella, with her full-scale Prayer; Ivo Zídek as one of the two brothers who not only fall in love with the same girl, but later discover that she is their sister. As the other brother, Zdenek Otava, Toby Micha in the Supraphon *Bartered Bride*, steps up to the footlights with a fine aria sung in a fine baritone. When the tragedy is complete, Karel Kalas comes forward, Padre Guardiano-like, with a short grave utterance. The most impressive piece of all is a very beautiful and dramatic short Overture, excellently recorded. The rest of the recording varies between quite acceptable to fairly good.

Kirsten Flagstad's performance of the Wesendonck Lieder (perhaps the best recording of her voice ever made) is now available on a separate MP, Decca LW5302. No month without would be complete without its *Caro* and *Pag* reissues. This time they both come from the Columbia sets with Callas and Di Stefano. *Caro* is SEL1567, the whole of the duet "Tu qui Santuzza . . . No, no Turiddu", the first part of which did not figure in the 12-inch "potting". Very well done, and good full-blooded recording. SEL1562, from *Pag*, has on one side the greater part of the Nedda/Silvio duet (starting at "Decidi il mio destin", with Panerai as Silvio)—this was also omitted in the "potting"; and on the other "Recitar! . . . Vesti la giubba" and the Intermezzo—the same bits, in fact, that Victoria de los Angeles, Merrill and Björling offer on H.M.V. 7ER5063.

Columbia SEL1566 couples those boring "Spanish" choruses from *Traviata*, "Noi siamo zingarelle" and "Di Madride noi siamo matadore", with the *Trovatore* Anvil Chorus and Soldiers' Chorus. Norberto Mola's excellent Scala Chorus under Serafini.

D.G.G. EPL30237 holds two concerted numbers drawn from the Deutsche Grammophon *Magic Flute*: the very opening, Häfliiger's "Zu Hilfe!" leading on to the trio of the Three Ladies; and on the other side the Quintet "Hm! Hm! Hm! Hm!", in which the flute and bells are presented, and the Three Boys are described. A lovely piece of music, deserving of the attention thus specially focused on it, but spoilt here, alas (as is the trio), by a curious flaw in the recording. When the Three Ladies (Marianne Schech, Liselotte Losch, Margaret Klose) sing together, the sound takes on that curious kind of dither (is it called intermodulation?) which sometimes affects coloratura

soprano and flute in thirds, and even in real life can occasionally be heard when two ladies such as Norma and Adalgisa really get going on their higher thirds. Here the dither seems to cluster around Mme Klose—yet the excellence of her brief solo utterances suggests that it is not really her fault. I don't remember this on the complete set. Häfliiger makes a nice easy Tamino, and Fischer-Dieskau's Papageno is attractively intricate in its inflexions. Beautiful conducting from Fricsay. Schinkel's setting for the Realm of Starry Night makes a pretty sleeve—though it would have been more appropriate, perhaps, for a coupling of the Queen's two arias.

A.P.

NIGHTS AT THE ROUND TABLE

By W. A. CHISLETT

At the head of this month's orchestral records I bracket a brace which I am inclined to call unbeatable, and both are conducted by octogenarians.

In the first Bruno Walter and the Columbia Symphony Orchestra play four of Strauss's waltzes—*Emperor*, *Vienna Blood*, *Tales from the Vienna Woods* and *Bliss Danube*—and the overtures to *Die Fledermaus* and *Gypsy Baron* (Philips NBL5043) in a way which suggests that the rehearsals must have been as meticulous (and as happy) as those we hear in the famous record of the "Linz" Symphony of Mozart.

The master touches are all here. Dr. Walter lingers affectionately over the preludes and postludes to the waltzes and the subtle shadings throughout are a joy to hear. It is hardly necessary to say that the zither is heard in Vienna Woods, one cannot imagine Dr. Walter recording it otherwise.

The conductor in the other supremely satisfying record is Pierre Monteux and in selections from the *Coppélia* and *Sylvia* ballets he too has chosen music which he obviously loves (H.M.V. ALP1475).

Generous selections are given from both ballets as follows: *Coppélia*, "Prélude", "Mazurka" (No. 3), "Valse" (No. 1)—this is preceded by a "Scène (Andante)" which I cannot positively identify from memory and at the time of writing I have no score beside me—"Czárás" (No. 7), "Scène et Valse de la Poupée" (No. 14), "Ballade de l'Epi" (No. 5) and "Thème slave varie" (No. 6). *Sylvia*, "Prélude", "Les Chasseresses" (No. 3), "Intermezzo" (No. 4a), "Valse lente" (No. 4b), "Pas des époupiers" (No. 10), "Chant bachique" (No. 11), "Pizzicato" (No. 16a), "Violin solo" (No. 16b), "Marche et Cortège de Bacchus" (No. 14). I have given the titles in the order of their appearance on the record and the numbers are those from the W.E.R.M. The playing is equally noteworthy for its silky suavity and unrestrained pungency as demanded and as the recording is also first class this now becomes my first choice for a coupling of selections from these two suites.

I am less enthusiastic about a selection of operatic excerpts played by the Boston Promenade Orchestra under Fiedler on H.M.V. DLP1152. That both playing and recording are good almost goes without saying and some of the music is either originally orchestral or arranged quite happily, but to hear Figaro turned into a trumpeter in "Largo al factotum" makes me uncomfortable. The excerpts included are: *Aida*—Grand March,

Rigoletto—Quartet, *Tales of Hoffmann*—Barcarolle, *Barber of Seville*—"Largo al factotum", *Il Trovatore*—Anvil Chorus, *Lucia di Lammermoor*—Sextet, *Thaïs*—Meditation and *Faust*—Soldier's Chorus.

Two Capitol records made by the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra under Felix Slatkin are brilliant in performance and excellent in reproduction. "España" is the title of the first (P8357) but it is largely Spain as seen through the eyes of foreigners for the works are Ravel's *Bolero* and *Alborada del gracioso*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnole* and Albeniz's *Triana* (from "Iberia"). The first and third are, perhaps, the most effective. I should have liked a little more *gracioso* in the *Alborada* and I have always preferred *Triana* in its original piano form. Incidentally here it is played in the arrangement by Arbós, not that made by the composer himself. Comparisons with previous issues of these works would seem to be pointless as so much depends on couplings but those who want these four spectacular works on one disc need look no further than this.

The second of my Capitol records couples Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* and *An American in Paris* (P8343) and here comparisons can be more helpful, for the two works are coupled together in other recordings. The piano soloist is Pennario and he and orchestra alike play with magnificent brio and swagger. I have not heard the recently announced Morton Gould recording on H.M.V. DLP1148 but otherwise I think that this is the most desirable coupling of these two works. There is, of course, a tremendous performance of the rhapsody on Parlo. PMCI026 (which I reviewed in November 1955) but there it is coupled with the piano concerto.

Six Suppè overtures on one LP may seem a bit of a mouthful but the dividing bands on Col. 33CX1053 are wide enough to make selection easy. *Light Cavalry*, *Pique Dame*, *Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna* and *Poet and Peasant* are all familiar, although heard more often than not in arrangements for all sorts of unsuitable combinations of instruments. The other two—*Tantalusquale* and *Die Irreahrt ins Glück*—are virtually unknown today. Until this recording I had not heard the former, which is in Suppè's liveliest style, since I possessed it on an Edison cylinder record as a youth and I have never heard the latter before. It is quite dramatic and contains a suggestion of Wagnerian influence. Harry Krips and the Philharmonia Orchestra give bright, sparkling performances and the recording is excellent.

Kostelanetz and his Orchestra play 15 of the 38 numbers of Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* on Philips SBL5212. The titles as given on the record sleeve and in order of performance are: "Wedding Dance", "Introduction and Scene, Act II", "Waltz, Act I", "Dance of the Queen of the Swans", "Dance with Goblets", "Flight of the Swans", "Spanish Dance", "Dance of the Little Swans, Act II", "Mazurka", "Waltz of the Swans", "Dance of the Little Swans, Act IV", "Scene and Waltz, Act III", "Pas d'Action, Act I", "Hungarian Dance-Czardas" and "Final Scene". This is very competitive with other similar selections both in price and quality of recording. Its desirability, therefore, is chiefly a matter of performance. I am by no means a whole-hearted Kostelanetz fan but this is the sort of music that best suits his style. It is about 20 per cent cheaper than the Stokowski record which it most resembles.

Kostelanetz also plays "Kreisler Favourites" on an EP (Philips NBE11058). Of the four titles three are by Kreisler—*Caprice Viennois*, *Tambourin Chinois* and *Stars in my eyes* (from "The King steps out"). The fourth is an arrangement by him—*The Old Refrain*. An excellent record to induce relaxation.

Barbirolli and the Halle Orchestra on Pye CEC32004 do not quite invest *The Gypsy Baron Overture* with the finesse and subtlety of phrasing of Bruno Walter but it is very good and is backed by an equally good and well-recorded version of Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel Overture*.

The two sides of "Music in Vienna" (Col. SEG7719) played by the **Orchestre Raymonde** are labelled *Delibes in Vienna* and *Gounod in Vienna*, and originate from the old 78 r.p.m. recordings. Both contain a lot of very brief snippets strung together and neither is very exciting.

The Vox Company's reply to various similar series is a bunch of so-called "Cooks Tours". There are three so far but others may follow. They are "Holidays in Venice" (VX940), Vienna (VX970) and Spain (VX980). All are rather conventional and obvious. Venice opens with the splashing of water, which is over-amplified, and a gondoliers' call. These will become very tiresome after one or two hearings. Then follow a series of tunes associated with Venice played by **Gianni Monese and his Orchestra** of which the best known is *Il Carnevale di Venezia*, variations on which include one "à la rumba" and another which I can only describe as "à la an out-of-tune hurdy-gurdy".

As might be expected the Vienna disc, played by **Heinz Sandauer and his Orchestra**, is devoted chiefly to Johann Strauss and Franz Lehár, though snippets by Suppé, Millöcker, Kreisler and others are included. Spain is made to sound brassy and guitarish in turn by **Jose Valdes y los Embajadores** and there are lashings of castanets and rhythmic hand clapping. The music includes *El Relicario* and *Ay, Ay, Ay* but many of the items are less familiar in detail if not in genre. The idea of this series is good but could have been exploited more imaginatively.

My last orchestral record is an EP dubbed from a couple of old 78s. On one side is Hubert Bath's *Cornish Rhapsody* (which was featured in the film "Love Story") played by **Harriet Cohen** and the L.S.O. conducted by the composer and on the reverse is the ever-popular scherzo from Litoff's *Concerto Symphonique* played by **Irene Scharrer** and the L.S.O. conducted by **Sir Henry Wood** (Col. SEG7718). Although each occupies one side uninterruptedly in its new dress the former is comically described on the label as "Parts 1 and 2" and the latter even more comically as "Concerto Symphonique

No. 4: Second Movement—Scherzo (First Part); Second Movement—Scherzo (Conclusion)". In fact the breaks between the original two sides are in both cases quite well negotiated and the dubbing is well done.

Two Decca records are so interesting and entertaining that they almost deserve to be promoted to the orchestral class. Indeed they both sound better than some orchestras I have heard! One is the second record to be issued of the **Carroussel Béquart Mammoth Fair Organ**, which after fifty years is still in perfect condition and regular use in Belgium and elsewhere (LFI290) and the other is of a **Dutch Barrel Organ** (DFE6406).

The barrel organ is the genuine article, not what is often so misnamed, and is obviously a large one fitted with drums and all sorts of other percussion contraptions. The main difference between barrel organs and fair organs seems to be that the former are operated by pins projecting from the outside of a slowly revolving cylinder which work trigger-like keys, the latter are operated by perforated rolls similar to those used on pianolas. These are both magnificent specimens of their kinds.

My solitary military band record is "The Scots Guards on Parade, No. 2", an EP originating from the LP which I reviewed in October, 1955. For the benefit of those who only like the pipes in small doses, or who sympathise with the American woman who on hearing them for the first time at Edinburgh, ejaculated: "Isn't it lucky that they don't smell?", I had better say that *Lillibulero*, *Wee MacGregor, Scotland the Brave* and *Cock o' the North* are all played by the regimental band and only the *Regimental Quick March*, *Hielan' Laddie*, is played by the massed pipers (Col. SED5540).

Previous D.G.G. one-record selections from operas have been so good that they have set a very high standard for their successors. Good though it is I do not think that *The Tales of Hoffmann* quite measures up to this on DG17049. A contributing factor is, of course, that so essentially French a work is here sung in German. There is rarely any profit in singing an opera in any language other than the original or that of the country in which it is being given. The soloists are **Käthe Nentwig**, **Anny Schleman**, **Grace Hoffmann**, **Walter Ludwig** and **Otto Wiener**. In the main they are sound if no more but the first-named is not equal to the florid singing demanded in "Olympia's Aria".

Other shows from which excerpts are offered are slices from the sound track of the film *Alexander the Great*, which is calculated to appeal more to those who have seen the film than those who have not, and a group of songs from *The Dubarry* sung by the inimitable **Anny Ahlers**, an excellent dubbing from a very good old recording. What an artist Anny Ahlers was and how tragic her early death.

Folk music this month comes from both East and West, and I should have liked more space in which to discuss it than what I have left. In "Folk Songs of the New World" the **Roger Wagner Chorale** display their usual high standard. There are work songs, shanties, cowboy ditties, etc., and all are sung with the utmost polish and sophistication (Capitol P8324). Personally I like the singing of all except *Shenandoah*.

A couple of Supraphon records are much less sophisticated, and so to some, though not all, will be more attractive. LPM141 is the least documented record I have ever had. Label and sleeve between them merely announce "Rumanian Folk Songs and Dances sung by Maria Lataretu and the Popular Ensemble of the Rumanian Folklore Institute, conductor Ionel Budisteanu". Not a word as to what the ten tracks contain and not even a hint that

most of them are purely instrumental, in which either a violin or a flageolet of sorts plays a melody over a thrumming accompaniment. An interesting disc about which I wish I knew more. There is a considerable gypsy influence in the music but less than I expected.

LPM187 does list the titles sung and played by the **Alexandrov Song and Dance Ensemble** but the very full sleeve note is concerned solely with the organisation and makes no attempt to tell us what the songs are about. The titles help, of course, in some cases. Thus the first is *Moscou-Peking* and others include Albanian and Artillery marches, *Fatherland* and *We are for Peace*. Again an interesting disc though much of the music is decidedly Western.

Father Sydney MacEwan appears on two labels this month. Nixa NPT19008 is called "Songs of the Gael" and includes eight titles, some of them made famous by John McCormack of whom Father MacEwan's voice reminds me a little occasionally. Philips NBE11056 is called "Hebridean Songs, Vol. 1" and contains five songs, again mostly well known and of which the *Island Shieling Song* is mis-spelt on the sleeve. Both records are first class in every way as is **Kenneth McKellar** in a baker's dozen of similar songs on Decca LK4203. The only song included by both singers is the *Uist Tramping Song* and in this I prefer Mr. McKellar's greater incisiveness.

One might almost rank "An old-time Music Hall" by **The Variety Singers and their Chairman** as folk music today. There is too much "atmosphere" and too many songs are attempted on one small disc for my taste but it will be welcomed particularly for the sake of Charles Coburn himself in his two most famous songs. I can remember many of the original artists—Vesta Victoria, Gus Elen, Eugene Stratton, etc.—as a youth. Some of the impersonations are excellent and others are less good (Col. SEG7712).

My last anthology of songs is one by **Gigli** (H.M.V. BLP1095). There are eight songs: *Canario Cantatore* (Ferraro-Campese), *Chesta canzone* (Cangiulla-Piccinelli), *Ninna Nanna* (Ricci), *Luna nova* (Di Giacomo-Costa), *Te parole* (Bonacci-Cecconi), *Ninna Nanna* (Salta), *Varca lucente* (Mangieri) and *Ave Maria* (Cecconi). My copy is a white-label one with no sleeve but a quick reference to my files reveals that all these were recorded in London in April 1933 and have not hitherto been issued. There are still four songs recorded at the same session which have yet to appear. The orchestra is conducted by **Enrico Sivieri**, there is a chorus of girls in some of the songs and the great man himself is in splendid form.

I have tried three new EP children's records on several listeners, old and young, and the majority opinion is that **Enid Blyton** in her own "Noddy Stories" (H.M.V. 7EG8260) is more successful than **Peter Madren** and **Norma Shebbeare** in stories by Robert Tredinnick about Noddy and Algernon, Louis the Cod and Mou Mou the Field Mouse (Nixa NEP24022 and 4) but that Miss Blyton would be even better if she followed the example of the latter and had one longer story on each side instead of two shorter ones.

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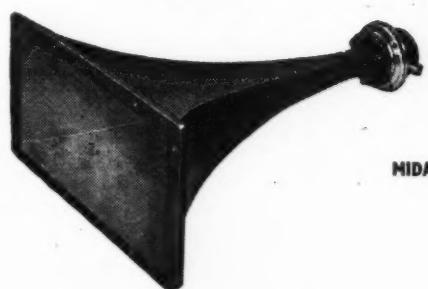
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Connie Boswell and The Original Memphis Five

***When My Sugar Walks Down The Street (Jimmy McHugh, Austin) (V) : Say It Isn't So (Berlin) (V) : At The Jazz Band Ball (Nick La Rocca, Larry Shields) : Japanese Sandman (Richard Whiting, Egan) (V) : Make Love To Me (Brunies, Stitzel) (V) : My Honey's Lovin' Arms (Ruby, Meyer) : Pagan Love Song (Brown, Fraed) : Giannina Mia (Frini, Harbach) (V) : Singin' The Blues (Young, Conrad, Robinson, Lewis) : All Of Me (Simons, Marks) (V) : I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate (Piron) : When The Saints Go Marching In (Trad.) (V). (R.C.A. 12 in. LP RD27017-37s. 6½d.)

Connie Boswell (voc) ; Memphis Five: Jimmy Lytell (leader, clt) ; Billy Butterfield (tp) ; Miff Mole (imb) ; Frank Signorelli (pno) ; Gene Traxler (bass) ; Tony Sbarbaro (drz, kazoo). 16/11/1956. U.S.A. (Am. Victor.)

Maybe you're wondering why this isn't in the "Others" column. Well, it's so that I can give you the full *dramatis personae* in this little party thought up by Victor's Fred Reynolds to reintroduce a number of old friends.

Although Connie Boswell still has not become a great singer, it's nice to renew her acquaintance. But it's the supporting cast that provides the main kicks. It is announced on the front of the sleeve as The Original Memphis Five. That's hardly correct, for actually only three of the members of this renowned group of the 1920's take part in the proceedings—clarinettist Jimmy Lytell, theatre and radio M.D. since the 30's; Miff Mole, another who, although not now often heard in jazz, has been doing very nicely, thank you, free-lancing on records and radio programmes, including a straight music one; and pianist Frank Signorelli, who has been lured back from his song-writing activities. Making up the group are trumpet Billy Butterfield, who first became prominent when he was with the Bob Crosby band from 1937 to 1940; bass player Gene Traxler, who was playing with Tommy Dorsey well before that; and Tony Sbarbaro, drummer, with the Original Dixieland Jazz Band way back in 1917!

Everything in the garden isn't always that lovely. Somebody more conspicuous for a flair for gimmicks than good taste in jazz induced Sbarbaro to have a go on a kazoo. But all in all the veterans show that they can still toot a lively horn when it comes to a Dixieland ball. E.J.

Bob Brookmeyer Quartet

"The Modernity Of Bob Brookmeyer" : You Took Advantage Of Me (Rodgers) ; Jasmin (Brookmeyer). (Columbia-Clef EP SERB10068-11s. 1½d.)

Brookmeyer (saxes-imb) ; Jimmy Rowles (pno) ; Clark (bass) ; Mel Lewis (drz). Late 1954. U.S.A. (Norman Granz.)

Bob Brookmeyer's dead-pan tone and hesitant phrasing have often irritated me in the past. Yet I find this EP quite fascinating. Apart from a couple of piano choruses by Jimmy Rowles, both tracks are devoted to Brookmeyer's suave, urbane trombone playing, though his ideas seem tougher and his tone much more expressive than usual. C.F.

Dave Brubeck Quartet

"Jazz At Oberlin" : The Way You Look Tonight (Jerome Kern) ; How High The Moon? (Morgan Lewis) ; These Foolish Things (Eric Maschwitz) (s) ; Perdido (Lost) (Juan Tizol) (a) ; Stardust (Hoagy Carmichael) (Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12048-38s. 3d.)

Brubeck (pno) ; Paul Desmond (alto) ; Ron Grotty (bass) ; Lloyd Davis (drz). 2/8/1953. Oberlin College, Ohio, U.S.A. (Am. Fantasy.)

(a)—Available also on Vogue EPV1216.

Dave Brubeck and Paul Desmond interrupted in the middle of a violent quarrel ; a bassist still distraught after handing in his notice ; behind the drums a man feverish with influenza, playing against doctor's orders : on the face of it there seemed small prospect of hearing

JAZZ AND SWING

Reviewed by

CHARLES FOX, EDGAR JACKSON,

OLIVER KING, ALUN MORGAN

much good jazz from the Dave Brubeck Quartet when they walked on-stage at Oberlin College on the night of March 2nd, 1953.

The miracle is that—perhaps because of this personal tension—both Desmond and Brubeck were spurred to heights they seldom reach on more sedate occasions. Desmond's lengthy solo in *The Way You Look Tonight*, aggressive as well as lyrical, must rank among his greatest, while he takes five ferociously swinging choruses on *Perdido*.

I've never been happy about some aspects of Brubeck's playing: his tendency to hammer the piano, for instance, and his habit of using devices taken from classical music without properly translating them into the jazz idiom. Yet somehow, in spite of all the piled-up chords and romantic cadences, Brubeck's music can communicate an enormous sense of urgency. A hit-or-miss performer, he strives for emotional intensity rather than formal elegance, and in doing so runs the risk of sounding pretentious. This night, luckily, everything went right for him.

If the Pacific College concert (Vogue LDE 114) produced the finest Brubeck I've heard, this Oberlin performance runs it very close. Taken together, these two LPs contain the most exciting and satisfying jazz so far recorded by this controversial musician. C.F.

Ray Brown

"Bass Hit" : Blues For Sylvia (Marty Paich, Brown) (a) ; All Of You (Porter) (b) ; Everything I Have Is Yours (Lane, Adamson) (b) ; Will You Still Be Mine? (Dennis, Adair) (a) ; Little Too (Brown) (b) ; Alone Together (Schwartz, Dietz) (b) ; My Foolish Heart (Young, Washington) (a) ; Blues For Lorraine (Paich, Brown) (a) (Columbia Clef 33C9037-30s. 11½d.)

(a)—Brown (bass) ; JACK DU LONG, Herb Geller (altos) ; Jimmy Giuffre (clt, tnr) ; Bill Holman (sax) ; Harry Edison, Conrad Gozzo, Ray Linn (tp) ; Herbie Harper (imb) ; Jimmy Rowles (pno) ; Herb Ellis (gr) ; Mel Lewis (drz) ; Marty Paich (conductor, arr.) (Circa January, 1957. U.S.A. (Norman Granz.)

(b)—Same personnel, except Pete Candoli (tp) replaces Gozzo ; Alvin Stoller (drz) replaces Lewis. Circa February, 1957. Do. (Do.)

Bass player Ray Brown has appeared on countless records in recent years, but this is the first LP under his name. Marty Paich's arrangements are designed to show off Ray's considerable talents ; with a neo-Basie ensemble sound. The weakness lies in the fact that the bass is the least attractive of all the jazz voices when given such prominence, and Brown's strength lies in his rhythmic rather than solo playing. Some of the tracks would have been equally effective had they employed the rhythm section. Giuffre, Geller and Edison take characteristic if uneventful solos. I think we have heard all of Edison's pet phrases several

Clef, Norgran, Verve

To avoid confusion, from now onwards the company of origin for Norman Granz's American Clef, Norgran and Verve label recordings is being given as just Norman Granz.

times over in recent months. Perhaps the most noteworthy aspects are the virile, commanding lead trumpet work of both Pete Candoli and Conrad Gozzo and the entirely suitable drumming of the underrated Stoller. A.M.

***City Ramblers Skiffle Group**

***Good Morning Blues (Trad.) ; Down By The River (Trad.) ; Grey Goose (Trad.) ; Jubilee (Jean Ritchie) (Tempo EP EXA71-13s. 7½d.)

**Tom Dooley (Trad.)

***Mama Don't Allow (Davenport) (Tempo A161 ; 45A161-6s. 7½d.)

Russell Quaye (qudrilo, kazoo, voc) ; Hylda Sims, Jim MacGregor (grs, voc) ; Chris Bateson (blow-flute, jng) ; Pete Maynard (tub-bass) ; Shirley Bland (wasboard). 11/4/1957. London. (Decca for Vogue.)

Frankly, I found these rather disappointing after the Ramblers' very interesting disc made in Denmark a few months ago, reviewed last August. Choice of material is less interesting, as so much of it is on the beaten track, though *Mama Don't Allow* is delivered with rugged enthusiasm. Nevertheless, I still prefer this unit to any other skiffle bunch on record—because—like a six-piece group I heard recently—they feature a better-balanced instrumentation. O.K.

***Duke Ellington and his Orchestra**

"A Drum Is A Woman"

****Pt. I—A Drum Is A Woman (Vc) ; Rhythm Pum' Te Dum ; What Else Can You Do With A Drum? (Va). Pt. II—New Orleans ; Hey, Buddy Bolden! (Vb) ; Carribee Joe (Vb) ; Congo Square. Pt. III—A Drum Is A Woman (Pt. 2) (Vc) ; You Better Know It (Va) ; Madam Zajj ; Ballet Of The Flying Saucers. Pt. IV—Zajj's Dream (Vb) ; Rhumbop (Vb) ; Carribee Joe (Pt. II) (Vb) ; Finale (Vb). (Ellington ; arr. Ellington, Billy Strayhorn) (Phillips 12 in. LP BBL7170-37s. 6½d.)

Ellington (narrator, pno) ; Jimmy Hamilton (clt, alto) ; Johnny Hodges, Rich Henderson (altos) ; Russell Procope (alto, clt) ; Paul Gonsalves (trb) ; Harry Carney (bar) ; Cat Anderson, Willie Cook, Clark Terry (tp) ; Ray Nance (sop, vns) ; Quentin Jackson, John Sanders, Britt Woodman (imb) ; Betty Giannina (harp) ; Jimmy Woods (bass) ; Candido, Terry Snyder, Sam Woodyard (percussion). Vocals : Ossie Bailey (a), (d) ; Joya Sherrill (b) ; Margaret Tykes (c), (d). 17, 24, 25 and 28/9/1956 ; 22 and 23/10/1956 ; 6/12/1956. U.S.A. (Am. Columbia.)

This latest and most ambitious of all Duke Ellington's full-scale works is the story of an Ellington brain-child, Carribee Joe, and his drum that became a woman for whom Ellington thought up the absorbing name of Madam Zajj. Joe would have preferred to remain in his native wilds. But Madam had other ideas. She lured Joe to more exciting parts, even the moon, before finally landing him up in the American jazz grotto that is New York.

Having had an opportunity to hear the record only once, and then in conditions that were anything but conducive to contemplative listening, I feel it needs to be much more carefully studied before an appraisal that would be fair to readers (not to mention also the Ellington entourage) could be given. So, sooner than delay letting you know something about it until next month, I am pocketing my pride and quoting parts of well-known U.S. jazz authority Jack Tracey's review in *American "Down Beat"*, for sight of which I acknowledge the

courtesy of the "Melody Maker". He says:

" 'A Drum Is A Woman' is . . . a complete history of jazz; it is a history of the Negro in America; it is a history of the Ellington Orchestra; and it is a folk opera . . . But more than any of these, it is a revealing self-portrait of Duke Ellington. It is flamboyant, introspective, moody, inconsistent, sensual, humorous, romantic, and vital, and it contains many musical portions of such rare beauty that you know they could have come only from Ellington . . . You could spend a dozen listenings trying to grasp all the verbal and musical symbolisms that Duke uses, and in trying to root out all that Duke has to say, and I am quite sure you would find it more complex each time . . . Like all of Ellington's works of extended length, it is completely unique in that it couldn't possibly be performed by any other group and still retain its character. It comes not only from him, but from all the people around him . . ."

There is plenty more (American jazz critics can enjoy the luxury of spreading themselves at far greater length than their British brothers ever can find space to do), but I think I have given you sufficient to let you know that in Mr. Tracy's opinion (and, I humbly add, also mine) this is a record you *must* hear. E.J.

★Duke Ellington and his Orchestra

" Duke Ellington Presents . . ."

***Summertime (Gershwin); Laura (Milton Raskin); I Can't Get Started (Gershwin, Duke) (V) (i); My Funny Valentine (Rodgers); Everything But You (Ellington, James, George) (V) (ii); Frustration (Ellington); Cotton Tail (Ellington); Day Dream (Strayhorn); Deep Purple (Peter De Rose); Indian Summer (Victor Herbert); Blues (Ellington) (V) (ii); (London 12 in. LP LTZ-N15078—37s. 6d.)

Ellington (pno); Jimmy Hamilton (clt, tpt); Johnny Hodges (alto); Russell Procope (alto, clt); Paul Gonsalves (tpt); Harry Carney (bar, bass-clt); Cat Anderson, Willie Cook, Clark Terry (tpt); Ray Nance (tp, ssn, voc in 1); Quentin Jackson, John Sanders, Britt Woodman (tmb); Jimmy Woods (bass); Sam Woodyard (drz); Jimmy Grissom (voc in 1). February 7 and 8, 1956. Chicago. (Am. Bethlehem.)

This is the second Ellington LP to be released here via the Bethlehem label and it is less successful than the earlier "Historically Speaking, The Duke" album made at the same session. The record was designed to showcase the individuals, although I fail to see why Cook, Sanders and Woods were given no solos at all, while Nance, Hamilton, Hodges and Gonsalves make two or even three appearances apiece.

It is probably no coincidence that the most successful tracks—*Frustration*, *Day Dream*, *Blues* and *Cottontail*—are all Ellington compositions, for the Duke has always tailored the most suitable settings for his own men. *My Funny Valentine* is hardly the kind of tune for a band of this character and tradition.

Nance sings on *Started* (he gets the lyric wrong at one point) as well as playing the violin, thus lowering the value of this track. Grissom sings *Everything But You* and makes it clear that the male vocal department has never been an Ellington强点. Carney and Hodges are superb on *Frustration* and *Day Dream*, respectively. Gonsalves and the rest of the band race through *Cottontail* at around 86 bars to the minute. *Blues* is principally a sequence of solos and the two uncredited trombone choruses heard after Hamilton's tenor are the work of Britt Woodman.

A.M.

★Duke Ellington and his Orchestra

" The Duke Steps Out "

***Stevedore Stomp (Ellington) (a); Saratoga Swing (Bigard) (b); The Duke Steps Out (Hodges, Williams, Ellington) (c); Double Check Stomp (Bigard, Hodges) (d) (H.M.V. EP 7EG8249—11s. 1d.)

(a)—Ellington (pno); Barney Bigard (cl, tpt); Johnny Hodges (alto, sop); Harry Carney (bar); Freddie Jenkins, Artie Whetsel, Charles "Cootie" Williams (tpt); Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton

(tmb); Fred Guy (bjo); Wellman Braud (bass); Sonny Greer (drz). 7/3/1929. U.S.A. (Am. Victor.) (b)—Ellington (pno); Bigard (cl); Hodges (alto); Williams (tpt); same gtr, bass, drs. 3/5/1929. Do. (Do.)

(c)—Personnel as for (a), plus Juan Tizol (tmb); unidentified French horn (possibly in place of Jenkins); Teddy Bunn (gtr). 10/9/1929. New York. (Do.) (d)—Personnel as for (a), plus Tizol (tmb); possibly minus Jenkins. 11/4/1930. U.S.A. (Do.)

Note: Some of the foregoing details differ from those on sleeve, but are believed to be as nearly correct as possible.

Previous issues (all deleted): (a) H.M.V. B6106, BD6757; (b) B4929, B6352, B8828; (c) B4960, B6292; (d) B6277, B4939.

These are all reissues. Usually this column has no space to mention such things, but room has had to be found for these to correct errors in the discographical details on the sleeve, so I might as well go the whole hog and tell you something about the performances.

The period is that during which even the jazz intelligentsia liked plenty of bass, and Wellman Braud's bull-fiddle can be heard striding lustily on top of the rhythm section. The brisk *Stevedore Stomp* has solos by Cootie Williams, Harry Carney and Barney Bigard, but the most outstanding one is that by Joe Nanton playing open trombone. *Saratoga Swing* is the blues as few bands other than Duke's could play them in those days. Bigard and Hodges are spotlighted, but it is Cootie Williams's growling trumpet that takes pride of place. *The Duke Steps Out* has some good solo work by Hodges, Carney and others, but is notable mainly as the track on this EP on which we find more emphasis placed on the ensemble than on individuals. Note the tendency in the writing to separate the reeds from the brass rather than mix them. *Double Check Stomp* was written by Bigard and Hodges for the film "Check and Double Check" in which the Ellington band appeared. It is the most "commercial" tune in the set but that has not prevented the rhythm section from swinging out solidly behind more good solo and ensemble work.

E.J.

★Stan Getz

(No. 2)

***Fascinating Rhythm (Gershwin); Minor Blues (Brookmeyer) (Columbia Clef EP SEB10076—11s. 1d.)

Gets (tr); Bob Brookmeyer (alto-tmb); Johnny Williams (pno); Teddy Kotick (bass); Frank Isola (drz). August, 1953. U.S.A. (Norman Granz.)

We have heard this particular Stan Getz Quintet on record several times before. It is a workmanlike unit playing jazz of a higher temperature than that associated with Getz of six or seven years ago. Brookmeyer is the least impressive of the five; his doleful, ultra-relaxation is one of the most sterile sounds of recent years. Stan swings hard on *Fascinating Rhythm*, on which he uses a steel mouthpiece, and hits some lower notes on *Blues* when he changes to a plastic mouthpiece. Johnny Williams's throbbing solo style is ideally complemented by Isola and Kotick to make this a well-integrated team.

A.M.

★Dizzy Gillespie Big Band

***Pill Driver; Cool Eyes; Confusion; Bob Nail Special (All Harding, Gillespie) (Columbia Clef EP SEB10075—11s. 1d.)

Gillespie (tp); Hilton Jefferson, George Dorsey (alto); Hank Mobley, Lucky Thompson (bass); Danny Bank (bar); Quincey Jones, Jim Nottingham, Ernie Royal (tp); Leon Cormenge, J. J. Johnson, George Mathews (tmb); Wade Legge (pno); Lewis Hackney (bass); Charlie Persip (drz). Late 1954. U.S.A. (Norman Granz.)

This record is by a big Gillespie-led orchestra which pre-dates the "World Statesman" band heard recently on a Clef LP. The writing is by Gillespie and the Count Basie arranger Buster Harding. The execution is rough and uncompromisingly aggressive, with solos by Gillespie, Jay Jay Johnson, Lucky Thompson and Wade Legge. This is not music for those

with delicate ears, for no punches are pulled as the band charges through its allotted time. Lovers of Gillespie's previous big bands will doubtless enjoy it all, but I must warn prospective buyers that there are no separating "bands" (or "rills") between the tracks thus making it almost impossible to select and play the inner tracks separately.

E.J.

★Woody Herman

***Makin' Whoopee (Walter Donaldson, Gus Kahn) (a); I Won't Dance (Kern, McHugh, Hammerstein II, Harbach) (b); I Guess I'll Have To Change My Plan (Schwartz, Dietz) (b); Willow, Weep For Me (Ronell) (a); Moon Song (Sam Coslow, Johnson) (a); Can't We Be Friends? (Swift, James) (b); Comes Love (Tobias, Brown) (b); Everything I've Got (Rodgers, Hart) (b); Alone Together (Schwartz, Dietz) (a); Bidin' My Time (Gershwin) (a); Isn't This A Lovely Day (Berlin) (b); Louise (Whiting, Robin) (a) (H.M.V. 12 in. LP CLP1130—35s. 10d.)

(a)—Herman (voc) acc. by: Ben Webster (tr); Harry Edison (tp); Jimmy Rowles (pno); Barney Kessel (gtr); Joe Mondragon (bass); Larry Bunker (drz). Early 1957. U.S.A. (Am. Norman Granz.) (b)—Herman (voc) acc. by: Charlie Shavers (tp); Bill Harris (tmb); Lou Stein (pno); Bauer (tr); Milt Hinton (bass); Jo Jones (drz); unidentified saxes, etc.; Marty Paich (cond, arr.). Do. Do. (Do.)

★Woody Herman and his Orchestra

" Twelve Shades Of Blue "

***Blues In The Night (Mercer, Arlen) (V) (d); My Blue Heaven (Donaldson, Whiting) (V) (g); Blue Flame (J. A. Noble) (a); The Blues Are Brewin' (Alter, De Lange) (V) (a); Blue Prelude (Bishop, Jenkins) (V) (e); In The Blue Of The Evening (Adair, D'Arteaga) (V) (b); Blue Moon (Rodgers, Hart) (V) (b); Am I Blue? (Akst, Clarke) (V) (c); Under A Blanket Of Blue (Symes, Neiburg, Levison) (V) (f); I Gotta Right To Sing The Blues (Arlen, Koehler) (V) (f); I've Got News For You (Alfred) (V) (h); Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea (Arlen, Koehler) (V) (g) (Philips 12 in LP BBL7124—37s. 6d.)

(a)—Herman (clt, voc); Sam Marowitz, Sam Rubinowitch (altos); Joe "Flip" Phillips (tr); My Little Porkpie (bar, alto); Conrad Gozzo, Carroll Lewis, Bob Peck, Chuck Peterson, Al Porcino (tp); Bill Harris, Ed. Kiefer, Ralph Pfiffer (tmb); Jimmy Rowles (pno); Chuck Wayne (tp); Joe Mondragon (bass); Don Lamond (drz). 10/12/1946. Chicago. (Am. Columbia.) (b), (c)—Herman (clt, vcl, voc); Sam Marowitz, Sam Rubinowitch (altos); Joe "Flip" Phillips (tr); My Little Porkpie (bar, alto); Conrad Gozzo, Carroll Lewis, Bob Peck, Chuck Peterson, Al Porcino (tp); Bill Harris, Ed. Kiefer, Ralph Pfiffer (tmb); Jimmy Rowles (pno); Chuck Wayne (tp); Joe Mondragon (bass); Don Lamond (drz). (d) (Philips 12 in LP BBL7124—37s. 6d.)

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The full test report appeared in the February, 1957 issue of "Wireless World," pages 22 and 23.

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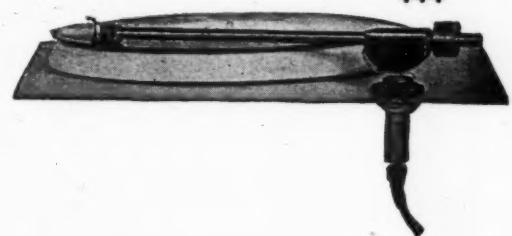


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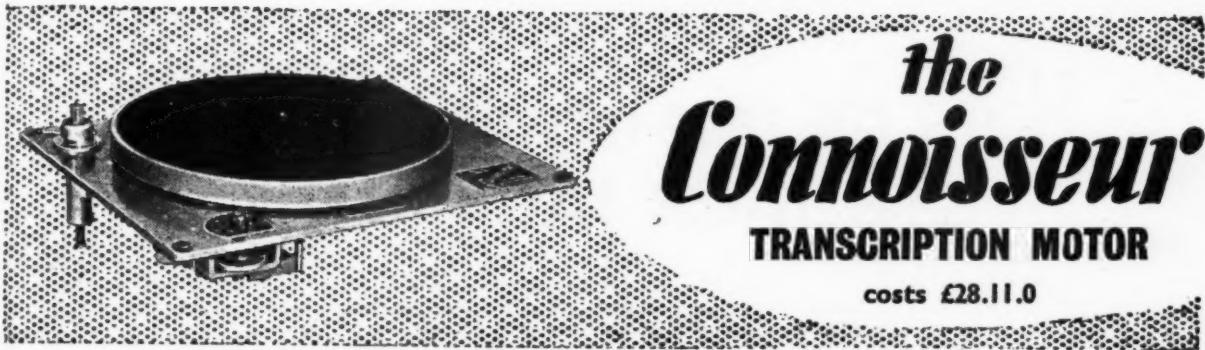
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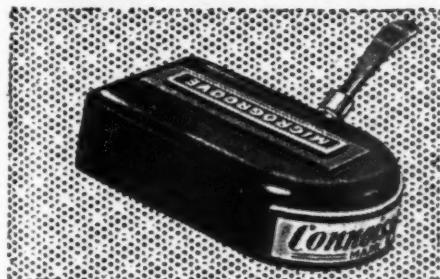
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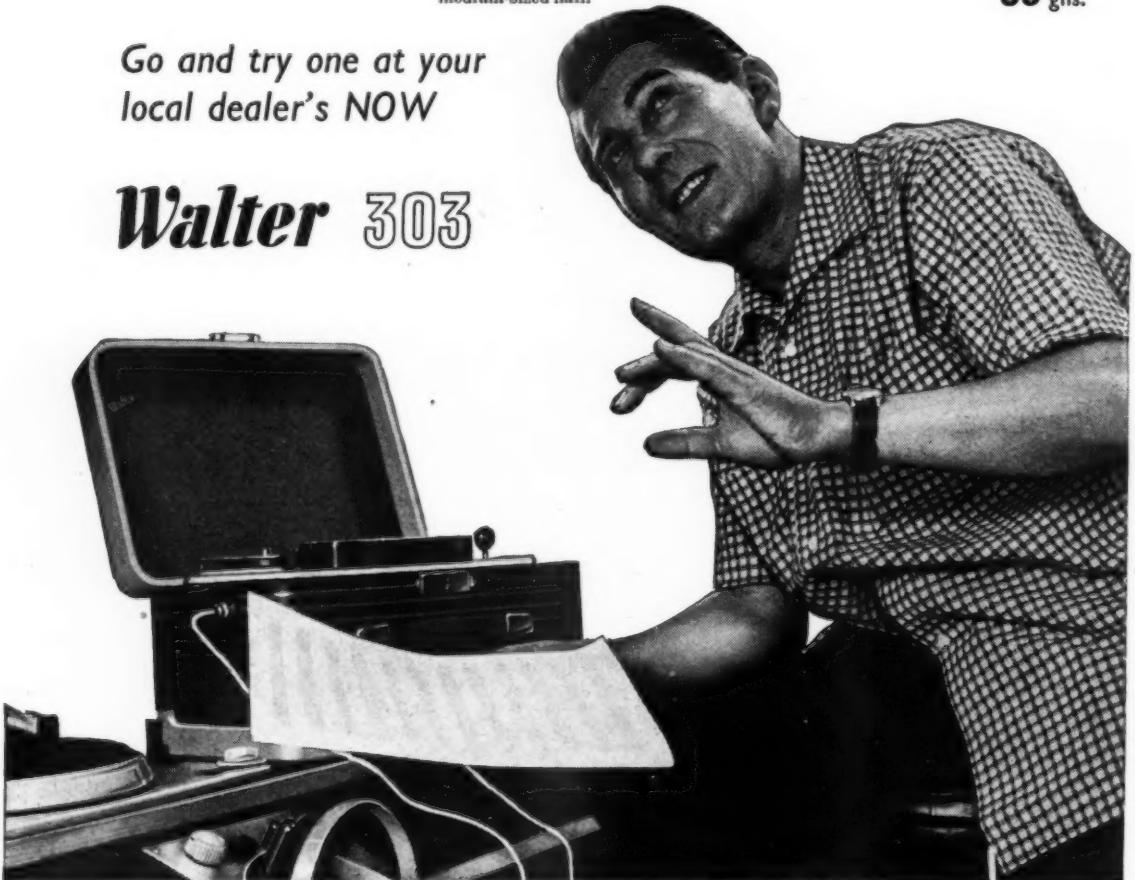
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Am I Blue?) to swing "pops" of the time, which as regards both arrangement and performance would not have disgraced an exclusively jazz-conceived album. Among the latter is *I've Got News For You*, a number which is a misfit to the extent that its title does not include the word "Blue", but which more than compensates for this by being the most righteous blues song in the set, with an arrangement and performance worthy of it.

But even the more "commercial" tracks have plenty to appeal to those likely to be reading this column; the orchestrations still sound good, the playing has the musically elegant and swing content usually found when a first-class band is on the job, and quite a few of the fine jazz soloists who abound in the groups find opportunities to speak out in our language.

The H.M.V. LP is Herman completely forsaking handleading and instrument playing to feature as a vocalist. And quite well he does it, too. No Johnnie Ray exaggerations, no Elvis Presley rock 'n' roll vulgarities. Just the competence of tone, intonation etc. and attractive swing style you'd expect from a top flight jazz character.

But it is the accompaniments that have done most to win this album its four stars. The individuality of the excellent players so understandably engaged by Norman Granz is used tastefully and imaginatively, both for backing Herman and for solo relief. Note, as just one random example, the original and most effective use of just Milt Hinton's bass to accompany Herman for the first nine bars of *Change My Plan*.

International Jazz Group

"Entente Cordiale Of Jazz"
***Concerto Du Blues (Bud Johnson); *If It Weren't For You* (Dobson, Johnson)
(Columbia) EP SEC7715—11s. 14d.)

Bud Johnson (int); George Berg (bar); Taft Jordan (tp); Vic Dickenson (imb); Andre Persiany (pno); Arvell Shaw (bass, leader); Gus Johnson (dr). October, 1956. New York. (French Columbia.)

France seems to abound with good jazz pianists capable of holding their own with the best America can offer. Following the lead set by Henri Renaud when he made a series of records for Vogue during his trip to New York in the spring of 1954, the Milt Buckner-inspired André Persiany took part in three sessions in New York on October 15th, 17th and 19th of last year. As you will see from the details above, he assembled a fine little band including the excellent ex-Ellington trumpeter Taft Jordan, the ex-Armstrong bass player Arvell Shaw and ex-Count Basie men Gus Johnson and Vic Dickenson.

Tenor man Budd Johnson (one-time arranger for Billy Eckstine's big band) is featured throughout *If It Weren't For You*, a tune reminiscent of *What A Difference A Day Makes*, with the rest of the band blowing sustained accompanying figures. Budd opens the solo sequence on the reverse which has additional choruses by piano, bass, trumpet and trombone. Any readers who enjoyed the Buck Clayton Jam Session LP's on Philips are likely to want this EP, for, despite the more disciplined arrangements, the mood is similar. I trust Columbia will now let us have further titles from these Persiany sessions.

A.M.

George Lewis' Ragtime Band

*Ice Cream (Johnson, Moll, King) (V) (a); Down By The Riverside (Trad.) (V) (a); Burgundy Street Blues (Lewis) (V) (b); Just A Closer Walk With Thee (Trad.) (V) (c); Panama (Tyres); Doctor Jazz (Oliver) (V) (d); When The Saints Go Marching In (Trad.) (V) (e); Lou-easy-an-i-a (Louisiana) (Darensburg) (V) (f)

(Tempo 12 in. LP TAP13—38s. 9d.)

Lewis (alt); Kid Howard (tp); Jim Robinson (tp); Alton Purnell (pno); Lawrence Marrero (tp); Alcide "Slow Drag" Pavaugeau (bass); Joe Watkins (dr). Vocals: (a), (d) Watkins (b)

Monette Moore; (c) Watkins, Howard; (e) Howard; (f) Purnell. 25/12/1956. Los Angeles. (Am. Jazzmen.) Note—(a) and (b) available also on Tempo EXA62.

Very average Lewis, with all the usual faults and failings, alongside the virtues. I prefer *Burgundy Street* without the peculiar recitative from Monette Moore, too.

I wonder if the lads can play any other numbers than these? They were doing them when I visited New Orleans in November, 1951, and subsequent records have impressed me with their sameness. O.K.

Book Review

ENCYCLOPEDIA YEARBOOK OF JAZZ*

This is Leonard Feather's first (and your reviewer hopes henceforth annual) follow up of his "Encyclopedia Of Jazz", British printing of which was published here last year.

In exactly the same format and handsome production as the "Encyclopedia", it covers the period from where the "Encyclopedia" ended up to 1956.

Its main section is devoted to biographies of jazz musicians who sprang to fame since the "Encyclopedia" went to press and bringing up to date the biographies of those originally mentioned in it, and the wealth of information given—it includes the birth places, ages, careers, recordings, artistic features and often private addresses of the subjects—is again a tribute to the author's amazing patience and industry.

There are also chapters devoted *inter alia* to: "What's Happening In Jazz" (and if you think there was nothing during 1956, read what Feather says and then bow your head in shame); analysed and tabulated opinions of 100 famous jazz musicians on who are (and were) the greatest jazz instrumentalists, vocalists, big and small bands etc. of the time; the fifty-two recordings which in the opinion of the author were the best issued between the summer of 1955 and the summer of 1956, with his reasons for his choices; favourite recorded versions of some twenty-five tunes that have become favourites in jazz.

If ever there were two "musts" for everyone interested in or any way concerned with jazz, they are the indefatigable and world-recognised authority Leonard Feather's "Encyclopedia Of Jazz" and his extension of it, the just published "Encyclopedia Yearbook Of Jazz". R.G.

* Arthur Baker Ltd., 30 Museum Street, London, W.C.1. 190 pp. (inc. 32 pp. of "Candid Camera" pictures of musicians). 42s.

Warne Marsh Quintet

"Jazz Of Two Cities"
***Smog Eyes (Ted Brown); Ear Conditioning (Ball); Lover Man (Ramirez); Quintessence (Ball); Jazz Of Two Cities (Brown); Dixie's Dilemma (Warne Marsh); Tchaikovsky's Opus 42, No. 3; I Never Knew (Ted Fio Rito)

(London 12 in. LP LTZ-P15080—37s. 6d.)

Marsch, Ted Brown (tws); Ronnie Ball (pno); Ben Tucker (bass); Jeff Morton (dr). Probably mid-1956. Hollywood. (Am. Imperial.)

Really, the titles they give records these days get curioser and curioser! This one, "Jazz Of Two Cities", baffled me until I came across Nat Hentoff's explanation in a recent "Down Beat". Four men out of this quintet, says Mr. Hentoff, studied with Lennie Tristano in New York and worked around that city before moving out to Los Angeles.

Not surprisingly the music shows traces of Tristano's influence. Intricate and ingenious, it is aimed at the head rather than the heart. As well as being heard in good solos, the two tenors interweave, play in unison and create

many intriguing textures. Perhaps the lack of tonal contrast grows a little monotonous before the end of the record, but that's my only grouse. *Quintessence* strides faster and more loosely than the other tracks. Most intense is *Lover Man*, with British export Ronnie Ball taking his best solo of the session.

The sleeve-note slips up badly in not advising us which solos are by Warne Marsh and which by Ted Brown. Their styles are so alike that it's hard to tell them apart. C.F.

Jack Montrose Sextet

***Listen, Hear (Montrose) (a); Bewitched (Richard Rodgers); Some Good Fun Blues (Montrose); Fools Rush In (Blow); Speak Easy (Montrose); Credo (Montrose); Pretty (Montrose) (a); That Old Feeling (Brown)

(Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12042—38s. 3d.)

Montrose (int, arr); Bob Gordon (bar); Conte Candoli (tp); Paul Moer (pno); Ralph Pena (bass); Shelly Manne (dr). Spring, 1955. Hollywood. (Am. Pacific Jazz.) Note—(a) available also on Vogue EPV1201.

Close on the Montrose Quintet LP on London LTZ-K15043, reviewed by A.M. last month, comes this album by the composer-arranger-tenorist leading a Sextet.

Montrose's writing may tend to be predictable, but it is nevertheless interesting, and his solos show a distinct improvement over those on his earlier records. The most outstanding musician is, however, the late Bob Gordon (he was killed in a car accident in August, 1955). His rich-tone solo especially enhances the beauty of *Bewitched*.

As usual Conte Candoli plays better on this record by someone's else's group than he does on his own recording dates. He shows up as a relaxed inventive soloist. The rhythm section performs in an apt, intelligent manner, adapting itself to the dictates of Montrose's scores, yet still managing to swing. E.J.

Mick Mulligan Jazz Band

"Jazz At The Railway Arms"
*Careless Love (Handy, Williams, Koenig) (V); Thou Swell (Rodgers); Tin Roof Blues (New Orleans Rhythm Kings); I Thought I Heard Buddy Bolden Say (Morton); Basin Street Blues (Spencer Williams); I Can't Give You Anything But Love (Jimmy McHugh); Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams (Koehler, Barnes, Moll); How Long, How Long Blues (Carr) (V)

(Tempo 12 in. LP TAP14—38s. 3d.)

Mulligan (tp); Ian Christie (cl); Frank Parr (imb); Ronald Duff (tma); Nigel Sinclair (dr); Pete Appleby (bass); Alan Duddington (dr); George Melly (soc). 13/2/1957. At a public session at The Railway Arms, West Hampstead, London. (Decca for Tempo.)

Exactly why the so-called "intimate" atmosphere of a London pub should be deemed essential to the recording of a successful jazz performance is more than I can comprehend. At all events, this is an experiment that is a failure.

If you wonder why I say this, listen to the fumbling, inexpert rambling of the trombone on *Thou Swell*; the peculiar ideas on harmony exhibited by the pianist in most numbers where he is heard taking a solo (this is a case where the right hand *should* know what the left is doing); the divergence of opinion on the chords between the rhythm section members. O.K.

Hal McKusick Quintet

***Down And Dirty (Al Cohn); Alone Together (Schwartz); Criss Cross (Manny Albam); Gone With The Wind (Wrubel, Magidson); When Your Lover Has Gone (Swan); Pon-Su (Farmer); Makin' Whoopee (Walter Donaldson); Isn't It Romantic? (Richard Rodgers); For Art's Sake (Cohn); Old Devil Moon (Lane)

(Vogue Coral 12 in. LP LVA9062—37s. 6d.)

McKusick (alt, cl, bass-cl); Art Farmer (tp); Eddie Coats (pno); Milt Hinton (bass); Gus Johnson (dr). Date untraced. U.S.A. (Am. Decca.)

Only a couple of months ago I was complaining that I found Hal McKusick a disappointing soloist, his style too fidgety, his tone

too shallow. His latest LP hasn't made me change my mind.

Yet this is still a record worth listening to, and the credit for that can be given to Art Farmer. With a parched tone and nimble phrasing, Farmer is consistently lucid and expressive in his solos; sometimes fragile (*Gone With The Wind, Alone Together*), sometimes robust (*Cris Cross*).

Not long ago Eddie Costa was busy teaching high-school children, but gave up that job to make music his career. I am told that now he has been voted top pianist in the "New Star" section of the "Down Beat" Critics' Poll. Judged by his work on this record, he certainly deserves the honour. Unlike many modern pianists he uses both hands to play crisp incisive solos, combining delicacy with strength. With Milt Hinton and Gus Johnson at their best, the group swings along effortlessly. E.J.

★Charlie Parker

"Parker Plays Cole Porter"

"I Get A Kick Out Of You" (Takes 1 and 2); "Just One Of Those Things" (Takes 1 and 2); "My Heart Belongs To Daddy"; "I've Got You Under My Skin"; "Love For Sale" (Takes 1 and 2); "I Love Paris" (Takes 1 and 2). All Parker.

(Columbia Clef 12 in. LP 33CX10089—41s. 8½d.)

Parker (alto); Walter Bishop (pno); Billy Bauer (sax); Teddy Kotick (bass); Arthur Taylor (drs). December, 1954. U.S.A. (Norman Granz.)

Over the past ten years or so Mr. Norman Granz has built up an impressive reputation, not only as a jazz impresario and recording organiser, but also as a man of integrity and a friend to musicians.

Remembering this, I am doubly shocked to find him issuing this set of performances by Charlie Parker. Recorded three months before his death, at what is said to have been his last session, Parker's playing is that of a very sick man—the tone shrill and harsh, the phrasing anguished, the technique stumbling, the conception often without imagination or lucidity and at times even incoherent.

Admittedly there are flashes of Parker's true brilliance—notably in *Love For Sale* and *Paris*. It could hardly have been otherwise with a musician of such stature. But getting Parker to play Cole Porter tunes, apparently with their melodies intended to be the main attractions, was an inadvisedly "commercial" thing to do in the first place. Few musicians were less suited for such an assignment, and the issuing of alternatively takes of four of the six titles has only emphasised this and Parker's state of health at the time.

Let us face it: this record can only harm the reputation of a man who, at his peak, was as near to being a genius as any jazz musician ever has been, and it would have been kinder to Charlie Parker if Mr. Granz had let these tapes rest in peace in his archives. E.J.

★Nat Pierce Quintet

"Chamber Music For Moderns"

***"Dicty" (Pierce) (a); "Blues For Jean" (Pierce) (a); "By The Way" (Myrow) (a); "If I'm Lucky" (Myrow) (a); "Picadillo Swing" (Pierce) (c); "Hi-Fits" (Pierce) (b); "Fun East" (Pierce) (b); "No Love, No Nostalgia" (Warren) (b); "Shake Down The Stars" (Van Heusen, De Lange) (c); "Society Jumps" (Pierce) (c); (Vogue Coral 12 in. LP LVA9060—37s. 6½d.)

Pierce (pno); Anthony Ortega (alto, flute); Dick Wetmore (vn); Oscar Pettiford (bass); Gus Johnson (drs). (a) 23/1/1957; (b) 24/1/1957; (c) 26/1/1957. U.S.A. (Am. Decca.)

I am no lover of the violin in jazz, and the flute is another instrument I consider of doubtful value in this context. Therefore as far as I am concerned the most interesting parts of this record are those in which either Ortega plays alto or the rhythm section plays alone. Pierce, Pettiford and Johnson combine to make a superb threesome worthy of a much better front-line.

"Bat Man" Ortega will be remembered as the lead alto in the Lionel Hampton band which came to Europe at the end of 1953. He is a capable if somewhat unremarkable soloist. In fairness to Wetmore I must state that he is an excellent technician with a good jazz conception.

A.M.

★Ben Pollack and his Pick-A-Rib Boys

"Dixieland"

***"Canadian Capers" (Chandler, White, Cohen) (a); "Aunt Hagar's Blues" (Handy) (a); "Mighty Lak' A Rose" (Nevin, Stanton) (b); "Gonna Stomp, Mr. Henry Lee" (J. Teagarden) (a); "My Inspiration" (Bob Haggard) (a); "Sophisticated Lady" (Ellington) (c); "Beer Barrel Polka" (Vejvoda) (a); "Oy Mambo" (Brunner) (a); "Dardanella" (Fisher, Bernard, Black) (d); "Stompin' At The Savoy" (Sampson) (d); "That Da Da Strain" (Medina, Dowell) (d).

(London 12 in. LP LTZ-C15041—37s. 6½d.)

(a)—Pollack (trs); Matty Matlock (cls); Charlie Teagarden (tp); Max Schneider (imb); Sherman (pno); Bill Newman (gr); Morty Corb (bass).

(b)—Personnel as for (a), except Jack Teagarden (imb) replaces Schneider.

(c)—Personnel as for (a), plus Ted Vesley (imb).

(d)—Personnel as for (a), except Dick Cathcart (cornet) replaces C. Teagarden; Walter Yoder (bass) replaces Corb.

All possibly circa mid-1952. U.S.A. (Am. Savoy.)

Staring at one from the front of the sleeve in type as big as leader Ben Pollack's name are the words: "featuring JACK TEAGARDEN".

As Teagarden is now in the midst of a concert tour here (with Earl Hines, Max Kaminsky, Peanuts Hucko and Jack Lesberg) this bold presentation of his name may well be for many the main temptation to get this LP. Before succumbing they would be well advised to observe that (as confirmed in the sleeve note) Teagarden can be heard in only one of the dozen items—*Mighty Lak' A Rose*, and played as a waltz at that!—and remember that there are many other records on which he can be heard at much greater length and playing much more exhilarating music.

Nor do the rest of the proceedings do a very great deal to redeem the situation. Fifty-four year old, Chicago-born drummer Ben Pollack is renowned mainly for the fact that between 1926 and 1928 his band, which he then called his Californians, gave their professional debuts to such subsequently famous jazz personalities as Benny Goodman, Jimmy McPartland, Jack Teagarden and Glenn Miller. Although Teagarden is the only one of these early Pollackians in these studio groups that were assembled in (I believe) 1952, to resurrect the Pick-A-Rib Boys name which Pollack had first used in 1938, they nevertheless include some first rate jazz musicians. The trouble is that, even forgetting the existence of such tunes as *Beer Barrel Polka* and *Oy Mambo*, which have no place in music labelled "Dixieland" anyway, nothing in this pretty mixed bag of material seems to have inspired any of them. Indeed, the disc could hardly have sounded more unevenly polite had it been intended for the "commercial" market. Which, come to think of it, it probably was! E.J.

Note: You still have a chance to hear the Teagarden group on October 1st at Newcastle; 2nd, Liverpool; 3rd, Leicester; 4th, Bradford; 5th, Manchester; 6th and 13th, London Coliseum; 7th, Bristol; 8th and 9th, Birmingham; 10th, Sheffield; 11th, Cardiff; 12th, Bournemouth.

★Bud Powell

"The Genius Of Bud Powell"

***"Parisienne Thoroaré" (Powell); "Dusk In Sandi" (Powell); "Oblivion" (Powell); "The Last Time I Saw Paris" (Jerome Kern); "A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square" (Eric Maschwitz).

(Columbia Clef 12 in. LP CLP1129—35s. 10d.)

Powell (pno). Spring, 1951. U.S.A. (Norman Granz.)

The term "piano solo" has assumed a new meaning in recent years. At one time it was safe to take it at its face value; nowadays it

usually means a pianist accompanied by bass and drums. Therefore it is necessary to stress that these are piano solos by Bud Powell. The story is that he expected to find a bass player and a drummer at the studio when he arrived for the session, but Norman Granz had decided otherwise. The result is five stimulating pieces of music in which Bud is seldom hampered by the absence of colleagues. His fine technique and sense of rhythm carry him through, although there are times when he appears to be expecting a non-existent drummer to throw in punctuations of accents. *Parisienne Thoroaré* has become something of a jazz standard of late; the composer's own interpretation is therefore of value. A.M.

★Howard Roberts

"Mr. Roberts Plays Guitar"

***"I Hear A Rhapsody" (Fragos, Baker, Gasparre); "The Innocents" (Montrose); "Indiana" (Hanley, MacDonald); "Jillias" (Roberts); "Polka Dots And Moonbeams" (Van Heusen); "My Shining Hour" (Harold Arlen).

(Columbia Clef LP 33C9038—30s. 11½d.)

Roberts (gtr); Bob Enevoldsen (alto, *etc.*); possibly Marty Paich (pno); Red Mitchell (bass); Alvin Stoller (trs); unidentified woodwind section. December, 1956. U.S.A. (Norman Granz.)

One of the best guitarists on the Pacific Coast today, 28-year-old Howard Roberts, taught himself to play the instrument as a boy in Phoenix, Arizona, and came into jazz through "country and Western" music. For the past seven years he has worked around Los Angeles, mostly with the Bobby Troup Trio. Many British jazz fans heard him for the first time when "Jazz Studio Two" (Brunswick LAT8046) was issued here early in 1955.

Somehow Roberts' playing seems less synthetic than that of many present-day guitarists—spirited and vivacious, entirely modern in mood and style, yet direct and forceful. He can swing at fast tempo without losing the melodic line, or perform gently and sensitively—as in *Polka Dots and Moonbeams*, in which he is accompanied only by the rhythm section.

Not content with playing leisurely, intelligent tenor solos, Bob Enevoldsen switches to alto sax in *My Shining Hour*. Incidentally, on this track and *The Innocents* a woodwind section makes brief appearances, lightly and harmlessly tinging the general colour. Special praise for Red Mitchell as the outstanding member of a first-class rhythm team. E.J.

★Shorty Rogers and his Giants

"Shorty Rogers Express"

***"Blues Express"; "Pink Squirrel"; "Home With Sweets" (All Rogers).

(H.M.V. EP 7EG8250—11s. 1½d.)

★Shorty Rogers Quintet

"Wherever The Five Winds Blow"

**"North Wind" (Hurricane Carol); "South Wind (Breezin' Along In The Trades); "East Wind (Marooned In A Monsoon); "West Wind (The Chinko That Melted My Heart); "Fifth Wind (Prevailing On The Westerlies)" (All Rogers).

(H.M.V. 12 in. LP CLP1129—35s. 10d.)

Quintet—Rogers (tr, flugel horn); Jimmy Giuffre (cls, ten); Lou Levy (pno); Ralph Penn (bass); Larry Bunker (trs). 2/7/1956. Hollywood, (Am. Victor.)

Giuffre—Personnel untraced. 5/7/1956. Do. Do.

The Quintet disc is entitled "Wherever The Five Winds Blow" and the sleeve note consists of a lengthy discourse on meteorology (including a Biblical quotation). All this is tiresomely irrelevant, for the five tunes bear no relation to the subject matter. This is simply the Rogers Quintet ploughing through five so-so originals in a contrived, negative manner. Giuffre's clarinet (heard on all but *North* and *East*) is rapidly becoming one of the most boring sounds on record today. Surely he must, by now, have satisfied himself that he can play soft and low; I am still waiting to discover if he can make use of the instrument's upper register. Both Giuffre and Rogers are guilty of needless monotony in



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JACK TEAGARDEN, PEANUTS HUCKO,
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My bucket's got a hole in it; Bugle call rag

LA 8537 Personnel in next column

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Baby, won't you please come home;
I surrender, dear; Russian lullaby
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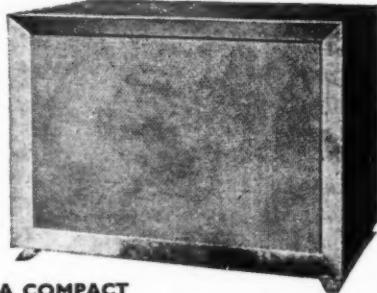
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their solos with their use of heavily reiterated notes and phrases. The best soloist is pianist Lou Levy who plays in a kind of amalgamated John Lewis-Hamilton Hawes style with plenty of swing and taste. Somebody over here should release the piano solo albums which Lou recorded for R.C.A. Victor.

The Giants EP is far superior. This is Shorty's big, studio-assembled band which seems to draw its inspiration from both Woody Herman and Count Basie. I fail to see why Rogers bothered to call the first tune *Blues Express* for this is actually *Tha's Right* (or *Boomsie*) which Herman recorded for Capitol, complete with the same ensemble figures. Art Pepper takes the first alto solo, the second alto sounding like Bud Shank. Pepper is again the star of both *Pink Squirrel* and *Home With Sweets*, playing with fire and a tremendous feeling of swing. *Sweets* fades out to the sound of Harry Edison's muted trumpet (he can still be heard at the beginning of the final run-off groove). Additional solos come from Jimmy Giuffre (tenor), Frank Rosolino (trombone) and Lou Levy (piano). I think it is safe to assume that the bass player is Ralph Pena and the drummer Larry Bunker but, rather surprisingly, the Victor recording sheets are devoid of information for this session.

A.M.

*Precher Rollo and the Five Saints

"Dixieland Doin's"

***Sensation Rag (Original Dixieland Jazz Band) (a); Blues My Naughty Sweetie Gives To Me (A. N. Swanstone, C. R. McCarron, C. Morgan) (b); Pralines (Parenti) (a); Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home? (H. Cannon) (a) (M.G.M. EP EP606—11s. 1½d.)

Rollo Layton (drs); Tony Parenti (clt); Tommy Justice (cornet); Gerry Gorman (tmb); Marie Marcus (pno); Al Mattuchi (bass). (a) 30/5/1952; (b) 3/8/1952. U.S.A. (Am. M.S.M.)

This unpretentious little group plays some quite pleasing jazz here, especially in slow tempo, as on *Pralines*. The other items are all rather on the well-beaten track, but they are played with conviction and enthusiasm. Parenti is the outstanding man, sounding rather like Albert Nicholas, but there is a pretty fair round of solos throughout all four tracks.

O.K.

*Jimmy Rushing with Buck Clayton and his Orchestra

"The Jazz Odyssey Of James Rushing, Esq."

**New Orleans Set: New Orleans (Carmichael) (b); Tricks Ain't Walkin' No More (Rushing) (c); Baby, Won't You Please Come Home? (Warfield, Williams) (b)

**Kansas City Set: Piney Brown Blues (Pete Johnson, Joe Turner); Tain't Nobody's Biz-ness If I Do (Granger, Robins); I'm Gonna Move To The Outskirts Of Town (Weldon, Razaf). All (d)

**Chicago Set: Careless Love (Handy); Doctor Blues (E. Lewis, Rushing); Rosetta (Earl Hines, Wood). All (a)

**New York Set: Lullaby Of Broadway (Warren, Dubin); Old Fashioned Love (James P. Johnson, C. Mack); Some Of These Days (Sheldon Brooks). All (e) (Philips 12 in. LP BBL7166—37s. 6½d.)

(a)—Rushing (voc); Clayton (tp); Hilton Jefferson (alto); Buddy Tate (tr); Danny Banks (bar); Ernie Royal (tp); Viv Dickenson (tmb); Hank Jones (pno); Skeeter Best (gr); Milt Hinton (bass); Joe Jones (dr). 6/11/1956. U.S.A. (Am. Columbia.)

?Erroneously given on sleeve as 1955. (b)—Rushing (voc); Clayton (tp); Tony Parenti (tr); Dickenson (tmb); Cliff Jackson (pno); Walter Page (bass); Jones (dr). Do. Do. (Do.)

(c)—Rushing (voc, pno); Walter Page (bass); Jones (dr). Do. Do. (Do.)

(d)—Rushing (voc); Clayton (tp); Tate (tr); Dickenson (tmb); Jackson (pno); Page (bass); Jones (dr). Do. Do. (Do.)

(e)—Rushing (voc); Clayton (tp); Jefferson, Rudy Powell (alto); Bud Johnson (tr); Dave McRae (bar); Billy Butterfield, Ed. Lewis (tp); Uriel Green, Dickie Wells (tmb); H. Jones (pno); Steve Jordan (gr); Hinton (bass); J. Jones (dr). Do. Do. (Do.)

Jimmy Rushing is one blues artist whose work has never appealed very strongly to me, but on these tracks he certainly enters into the

spirit of making good, somewhat amusing jazz aided by well-assorted instrumentalists.

I don't feel that any is a particularly great rendering, even with goodly slices of soloists of the calibre of Clayton, Dickenson and Parenti. Nevertheless, Rushing's admirers can safely add another star.

O.K.

*Saints Jazz Band

"Session With The Saints"

***Mahogany Hall Stomp (Spencer Williams); Blue Turning Grey Over You (Waller) (Austin, Berger); How Come You Do Me Like You Do? (Austin, Berger) (V); Willie, The Weeper (Bloom) (Parlophone EP GEP624—11s. 1½d.)

Alan Radcliffe (clt); Mike McNamara (tp); Fred Fyler (tmb); John Fish (pno); Nigel Sinclair (gr); Reg Kenworthy (bass); Jack Mills (dr). 15/9/1956. London. Parlophone.

Quite pleasant, business-like "traditional" jazz, with a very English vocal on *How Come*. This and *Blue Turning Grey* are the best two tracks here; the others are a shade too fast and unrelaxed. Radcliffe's clarinet harks back to Chicago and folk like Danny Polo, Edmond Hall and others who affect a croak and too much upper-register thin tone.

O.K.

"THE GRAMOPHONE" POPULAR RECORD CATALOGUE

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*Bob Scobey and his Frisco Jazz Band

"Dixieland Jazz"

***Muskrat Ramble (Ory); Trouble In Mind (Jones) (V); Copenhagen (Davis); Somebody Stole My Gal (Wood) (V); Lover Came Back (Young, Lewis, Handman) (V); My Gal Sal (Dresser) (V); Five Foot Two, Eyes Of Blue (Henderson, Lewis, Young) (V); Royal Garden Blues (Clarence and Spencer Williams); Stumbling (Zez Confrey) (V); Ain't She Sweet? (Ager, Yellen) (V); Milemen Joya (Morton, Rappolo, Mares); Getting My Boots (Hayes) (V) (Columbia 12 in. LP SSCX10089—41s. 8½d.)

Scobey (tp); Bill Napier (clt); Jack Buck (tmb); Jesse "Tiny" Crump (pno); Clancy Hayes (bjo); Al McCormick (bass); Freddie Higueras (dr). April, 1956. U.S.A. (Norman Granz.)

Jolly jazz of the brass persuasion that doesn't really mean an awful lot aesthetically, which in some ways is a good thing, though it can lead to some clumsy and careless phrasing. (Napier in particular is guilty of this.) Clancy Hayes' cheery vocals are more to my cornball taste than some of the dreary monotonous rubbish gleaned out by certain contemporary singers and his choice of numbers is good and original. Scobey plays sober, reliable lead, and everyone else has a good time.

O.K.

Betty Smith's Skiffle

**Double Shuffle (Smith)

**There's A Blue Ridge Round My Heart—Virginia (Bryan, Phillips, Schuster) (V) (Tempo 102, 45A162—6s. 7½d.)

Betty Smith (tar, voc); Brian Lemon (pno); Harry Phillips, Terry Walsh (gr); Jack Petherby (bass); Stan Bourke (dr). 4/7/1957. London. (Decca for Vogue.)

You may or may not agree with what I think of as skiffle—a free-and-easy romping music produced at best by unorthodox instruments like kazoo, harmonica, banjo, jug, tub-bass, washboard and trumpet-mouthpiece. But I venture to suggest—indeed, I aver—that there is no skiffle feeling here at all.

Betty Smith is an unusual example of a girl tenor saxophonist. She also has quite a pleasant cabaret style of singing which would probably have stood her in some esteem about thirty years ago. Viewed as moderate popular records which compare musically very favour-

ably with much of the gritty stuff churned out in the name of popular taste, these have some merit; but there is little jazz, and still less skiffle, in either.

O.K.

Art Tatum

**Begin The Beguine (Cole Porter)
This Can't Be Love (Richard Rodgers)
(Columbia Clef LB10069—7s. 4d.)

Tatum (pno). May, 1954. U.S.A. (Norman Granz.)

Art Tatum could make rings—technically speaking—round most of his contemporaries. A decorative rather than an inventive soloist, he adored melodies with exceptional lavishness. Sometimes the runs and flourishes sounded too inevitable; at others he played with extraordinary power and audacity. On this record he performs two standards with dazzling efficiency, yet little imagination, working to formula rather than searching for new ideas. Pleasant, of course, but not very satisfying.

C.F.

*"Very Special Old Jazz"

***Dick Heckstall-Smith Quintet: Fish Man (Bechet) (b); Monochrome (Sandy Brown) (b) ***Al Fairweather Sextet: Save It, Pretty Mama (Don Redman) (a); Last Minute Blues (Fairweather) (a) (Nixa Jazz Today EP NJE1037—12s. 10½d.)

(a)—Fairweather (tp); Sandy Brown (clt); Dave Stevens (pno); Cedric West (gr); Major Holley (bass) Stan Greig (dr). 28/5/1956. London (Nixa). (b)—Heckstall-Smith (sop); Brown (clt); Bill Jones (pno); Holley (bass); Don Lawson (dr). 20/8/1956. Do. (Do.)

Although I have given each unit four stars, it is not because I agree with the generic name of the record. The jazz is not old, nor is it very special. But it is jazz, and it's clean, musically, relaxed and tuneful jazz—all too rare features in a day when crudeness and rudeness are regarded as paramount.

Sandy Brown, one of the two men common to both groups, has a pleasing original blues in *Monochrome*, and I liked the treatment given to the Bechet number. Speaking of Bechet, Heckstall-Smith doesn't sound too much like the grand old man of the soprano. I liked Cedric West's guitar on *Last Minute Blues* O.K.

OTHERS

***Mel Tormé

Mel Tormé, one of the few singers who can pull together the jazz and popular-style stools and never fall between them, sings a collection of twelve songs associated with Fred Astaire—*Nice Work If You Can Get It*; *Something's Gotta Give*; *A Foggy Day*; *A Fine Romance*; *Let's Call The Whole Thing Off*; *Top Hat*; *White Tie And Tails*; *The Way You Look Tonight*; *The Pissoline*; *They Can't Take That Away From Me*; *Cheek To Cheek*; *Let's Face The Music*; *They All Laughed*.

Accompaniments, which materially help to give this November 1956-recorded set its four stars, are by arranger Marty Paich's Dr-Tette, amongst which, taking swinging solos, can be heard altoist Herb Geller, tenorist Jack Monrose, baritone sax Jack DuLong, trumpets Pete Candoli and Don Fagerquist and Bob Enevoldsen on both tenor and trombone. Others in the band are Vince DeRosa (french horn), Albert Pollan (tuba), Max Bennett (bass), Alvin Stoller (drums). (London LTZ-N15076.) E.J.

***Andy Williams

In Britain Steve Allen is best-known as the man who acted the leading role in the film, "The Benny Goodman Story". Yet that showed only one aspect of Steve's versatility. As well as being a pianist, an author and a leading American TV personality, he has organised jazz concerts and written a quantity of songs. Twelve of these songs can be heard in "Andy Williams Sings Steve Allen", the first LP to be issued here of a fresh-voiced young man from Iowa who has become very popular with television audiences in the U.S. *Tonight*, *Impossible*, *Young Love*, *All The Way Home*—these moody, romantic ballads, together with the nostalgic *Spring In Maine* and the livelier *Playing The Field*, are outstandingly good. Pleasant but more commonplace are *Stay A Little While*, *Lonely Love*, *Picnic*, *Forbidden Love* and the jazz-tinted *Old Piano Plays The Blues* and *Meet Me Where They Play The Blues*. Andy Williams, often sounding uncannily like Frank Sinatra, sings with warmth and good taste, discreetly backed up by a string quartet, rhythm section and the alto of Alvy West. (London HA-A2054.) C.F.

CONTINENTAL RECORDS

By LILIAN DUFF

This month's lot are curiously old-fashioned. Heaven knows I don't ask for Elvis Presley—though I gather his vogue is passing, too—but it's nice when a new idea shines through, when tunes and rhythms are not so ineluctably in the old familiar groove. Not that I didn't have a pleasant afternoon, listening to hackneyed ballads, Argentine tangos that made me feel I was watching Rudolph Valentino in "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse", and run-of-the-mill Italian sentimental stuff that the public never seems to tire of, and minor tenors, generation after generation, continue to supply in bulk.

The best of the new things, I think, is **Edith Piaf's Marie la Françoise** (Col. DC721). A French prostitute who has somehow made her way to Sydney continues to lament the lost delights of Paris but finds melancholy consolation in the reflection that her poor frail old mother believes she is married to a rich man in America. The words could hardly be more banal; yet, such is the power of a good tune and second-rate sentiment, put over with Edith Piaf's warmth and skill, the thing becomes not only pleasing to the ear but oddly moving. On the other side of the record we have a woman at the piano improvising on the inevitable love theme, point counter point, with every moment of happiness offset by memories of orphans, heartbreaks and unrequited love. It's lucky Mlle. Piaf has a touch of magic or the flow of clichés would be tedious.

Tino Rossi has been a favourite for more years than I can remember. It says something for his personality, material and method that

he still has an international public for material that has changed hardly at all with the years. Records may wear out. His voice seems indestructible. In *Le Secret d'Isabelle* (Col. DC723) he tells how the prettiest girl at the ball runs out weeping—and guess why. Because the man she loves is going to marry somebody else. Oh, well, I suppose such themes have a perennial appeal, and he sings charmingly enough even if his style seems almost Victorian to the fans of rock-and-roll.

Though three other Italians are younger, and their songs are nominally contemporary, the style is almost identical with Rossi's. "Songs from San Remo" (Parlo. CPMD17) have all been published before, but if you want to hear the winners at this year's festival, here they are. The first three prizes went to *Corde della mia Chitarra*, *Usignolo* and *Scusami*, sung here by Nunzio Gallo, Giorgio Consolini and Emilio Pericoli. *Corde della mia Chitarra* is a tango, and for those who fondly remember Valentino here are two more in the Argentine manner—*Don Pedro* and *Poema*, played by Piero Trombetta and his Orchestra Tipica (Col. DC722).

By way of a change, let me recommend two songs from the Italian Alps—or rather, the choir is composed of mountain folk; the words were inspired by the Italian expedition in 1954 to K2. *Montagnes Valdotaines* and *Belle Rose du Printemps* (Parlo. DP528) may not be to everybody's taste, but those who like something with simple, genuine emotion may find them as effective as I did.

Time For Dancers set on H.M.V. LP DLP1157. What a beautiful assortment of Dixieland that can teach some of our "trads" a thing or two, sweet waltzes like *Charmaine* without the gimmicks that popularised, although for me spoiled the old Mantovani disc of this, and Latin tunes.

Talking of Dixieland, **Sid Phillips** has four good standards of this persuasion on H.M.V. 7EG8253, things like *Clarinet Marmalade* and *Muskrat Ramble*. These are examples of good clean Dixie that all but the most advanced purists can enjoy.

But if Dixie is not your line, maybe a collection of four of **George Shearing's** successes, such as *Lullaby of Birdland* and *The Continental* (M.G.M. EP607) will please you. I had always thought the Shearing group rather insipid, but they pack a bounce into *Birdland*, which, though eight years old, is not a bit dated.

Fats Waller, on the other hand, reaches back into the mid-thirties on his latest EP (H.M.V. 7EG8255) with *My Very Good Friend The Milkman* and *When Somebody Thinks You're Wonderful* and other gentle numbers. The recording is not hi-fi, but when you get blasted out of your chair by some of the present-day efforts, that is almost a point in its favour. Surely the legacy Fats left us must be running out?

The same remark applies to **Glenn Miller**, who outlived Waller by exactly one year. (He was nearly 40 when he died, Mr. Sleeve-Note Writer, not 35!) We now have to consider H.M.V. 7EG8254 by the famous Miller band, in *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* (too much vocal), *Below The Equator* (rather ordinary) and *I'll Never Smile Again* and *Say Si-Si*, much better examples of Miller magic. Are there no more non-vocal Millers to be issued on EP?

For all the boxiness of the Miller recordings, I found them as a rule more pleasing than the frenzied harshness of **Robert Farnon's** Orchestra in four numbers by de Sylva, Brown and Henderson under the title *Together* (not included as a tune) on Decca DFE6412. Cyril Stapleton offers similar fare in precise, modern manner on Decca DFE6413, such numbers as *Blue Moon*, perhaps the best of the four, and *What Is This Thing Called Love?* It seems as if these bands must copy the less attractive aspects of certain American units. Such bands as **Ralph Marterie's** on Mercury MEP9517, embodying the two numbers I reviewed on standard discs last month, and two other noisy riff-ridden compositions.

I rejoiced in a couple of very pleasing (if not very enterprising) romantic tunes by **Roberto** and his Orchestra on *Vogue-Coral* Q72271*. These are *If I Only Had You* and *The Sea*, though I think we might have been spared those confounded seagulls and breakers on the latter. Frank Chacksfield certainly started something four years ago with his *Ebb Tide!* Even more attractive, and this is a special Oakland Gold Medal disc, is London HLR8469* by a small unit called **The Troubadours**. They play *Fascination* and *Midnight In Athens* with strings, accordion, marimba and whistling softly, in perfect taste and fine balance. I enjoyed the more lush, and at the same time more brilliant *Fascination* by **David Carroll** on Mercury MT170, backed by *Swingin' Sweethearts*, but the London record made a much stronger appeal on all points.

In less modern, but very acceptable strain is Philips PB737. This has two new tunes by **Hugo Alfven**. They are *Summerdance* and *Swedish Polka*, and both are fine examples of light music that is a cut above much of its class.

It's a bit late now for summer dances, but **Stanley Black** helps us to retain a warm memory of long days with his new LP of

MISCELLANEOUS AND DANCE By JOHN OAKLAND

An asterisk following a 78 r.p.m. number indicates its availability at 45 r.p.m. The numbers are the same with the addition of the prefix "45". Where the 45 r.p.m. number is different it is given immediately after the 78 r.p.m. number.

When I looked at the latest monthly supplements to hand before composing my thoughts for this review, I was first impressed by the enormous number of discs surging forth from the presses. All that new music, I thought; all that skiffle, and rock, and jazz, and sweet, and corn . . . but when I received the discs themselves, I began to realise that many of them are re-couplings on seven-inch EPs of earlier material, some of it twenty years old, or more. I presume this presages the imminent disappearance of the old 78 r.p.m. equivalents of these records, at the same time helping to fill out the catalogues.

I don't want anyone to think I'm not interested in these resurrections; some of them are very interesting, but I'm bound to admit that one or two do show their age. Take the **Bing Crosby** issue on H.M.V. 7EG8251, for example. This is the second volume of *The Young Bing Crosby*, and it includes *That's Grandma*, which is mostly by the old **Paul Whiteman** Rhythm Boys, and very dated (though amusing, even if we laugh at it, rather than with it); there is also a pleasant number with **Gus Arnheim's** Orchestra, *Thanks To You*, and a couple more with Whiteman, in which Bing's

part is that of single-chorus vocalist, the rest being given to the clumsy Whiteman orchestra (though Red Nichols has a nice solo on *I'm Coming, Virginia*). Just to show that the passage of thirty years since these were made hasn't aged him, Bing comes up with two new numbers on Cap. CL14761*, *A Man On Fire* (easy lilt and easy on the ear, more so than **Jimmy Young's** on Decca F10925*) and *Seven Nights A Week*, which is a rocker, and very pleasing too.

Pat Boone (London LP HAD2049) has a big set of these rock songs under the simple title *Pat*. I like rock when it's served up as cleanly and tunefully as this, with no apparent effort on the part of the singer.

We've started with references to vocals, but there are some fine instrumentals as usual. These range from the almost naive, but very cheerful brass band music of the **Happy Wanderers**, enterprising enough to try four Duke Ellington numbers (such as *Rockin' In Rhythm and Mood Indigo*) on Esquire EP147. A quarter of an hour of two trumpets, trombone, banjo and bass drum might seem too much to some, but I enjoyed the freshness of approach to these favourite tunes, and the precision of the rhythm section is quite something. The brass intonation is not all that it might be all the time, but it certainly isn't anything to worry about all the time either.

Contrast this with the sumptuous richness of **Joe Loss's** Orchestra in the eleventh *Dancing*

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Summer Evening Serenade, on Decca LP LK4123. Beautifully played romantic music, one of Black's best. He has the full orchestra with him here; on LK4176, in a set called *Tropical Moonlight*, he has only a small Latin-type rhythm section. They play exotic music very refreshingly.

Stanley Black's string tone is a joy; **George Cates'** on Vogue-Coral LP LVA9051 is more brilliant, but to me, it's less attractive. The set is called *Under European Skies*, a sort of musical tour of the Continent (the southern part especially), much the same as **Percy Faith's** *Passport To Romance* on Philips LP BBL7125, only this is rounder-toned. The Cates' orchestra is also heard in two themes from the film "End As A Man" on Vogue-Coral Q72273*. Rather formless, these.

George Melachrino on H.M.V. 7EG8252 has four romantic numbers, too. *Hello, Young Lovers* and others, played with the usual dressy efficiency we associate with this conductor. **Ray Martin**, though, has more original, and more sophisticated music under his baton on Col. 33SX1058. Each track is dedicated to a film star by her Christian name, the whole called *Vibrations*, and it is first-rate listening. To Cyd . . . To Audrey . . . To Marilyn . . . To Gina . . . and the music suits the subject like a Paris model. A sort of modern *Enigma Variations*. Ray Martin also has an EP (Col. SEG7716) of four Latin tunes that we've had on 78 r.p.m. (*Ecstasy, Lady Of Spain*, and so on.)

Violins are of course the mainstay of the Mantovani issue on Decca F10918*, with mandoline as well on *Mandoline Serenade*, echoing, but pleasantly; the reverse is *The Spring Song*, both from the Chaplin film "A King In New York". This is as good a version as any of these. There is a vocal one of the serenade by **Kenneth McKellar** on Decca F10920*, and it's as good a vocal treatment as anyone could wish for. The reverse, *The Camerons*, is the robust sort of music that is associated with this fine Scottish singer.

More violins, and the leader's in particular, are heard on a Mercury LP (MPT7522), which gives us **Florian Za Bach** (as it is spelt on the cover and the label) in a dazzling virtuosic display of *Golden Strings*. Brilliant though the technique is undoubtedly, it seemed to me to be an end in itself rather than a means to an end.

Piano soloists are at a premium, too, with **Winifred Atwell** (Decca F10924*) actually playing a proper piano in *Streets Of Sorrento* and *The Hope Waltz*, and very nice; the orchestral background makes a change from the clattering rhythm section. I think most people prefer to be able to pick and choose their music on an LP, even if they don't always take advantage of the scrolls, but as **George Feyer's** exposition of Hungarian music on piano, with guitar occasionally featured in good solos, has no scrolls, I assume it's meant as supper background music. The number is Vox VBX50, and the medley includes *Vip-It-Addy-It-ly* and Liszt's *Second Hungarian Rhapsody*, as well as a lot of Hungarian gypsy tunes that sound better on violins. Then there are five EP's on Nixa that span the last fifty years, a decade each, from 1905 to 1955, with **Frank Barely** at the piano, with rhythm. A chorus of each of twelve numbers from each decade, more or less chronological, dead straight, is the formula throughout. Rather dull.

Now let's have a look at the vocals. Folk song seems to be still *à la mode*, and while I can take what is generally termed skiffle, I don't really think it's necessary to sing of Our Lord and the Virgin Mary as do **Les Hobeaux** and his chorus in *Toll The Bell Easy and Oh Mary Don't You Weep*, on H.M.V. POP377*. Their voices are quite good, but this commercialised religion is not very tasteful.

I thought that **Max Bygraves** (Decca F10917*) was going to be much the same in *The Cricket Song*, but it's not about the game, but the insect, and as such is chirpy. So is the reverse, *We're Having A Ball*. Max, of course, is in the music-hall tradition, and even more so is **Molly Weir**, in *Glasgow and I'm Aggie From Glasgow* (Parlo, R4340*)—is there still a market for this naive humour?

The usual excerpts from films will delight the devotees of this branch of the arts. In particular, I found the new waltz song *Tammy* (from "Tammy And The Bachelor") as sung by **Debbie Reynolds** on Vogue-Coral Q72274* utterly charming, and streets ahead of the **Ames Brothers'** version on RCA 1015. It's the sort of song you find yourself humming all day without tiring of it; it's already moving up the Hit Parade, despite Debbie Reynolds' modest remark recently that only her relatives ever bought her records! The reverse is a strident contrast to the quietude of *Tammy*, in teenage vein, called *French Heels*—and it's one of the best of its kind, too.

THE MONTH'S CHOICE

Happy Wanderers	Esquire EP147
Joe Loss	H.M.V. DLP1157
The Troubadours	London HLR8469
Hugo Alfén	Philips PB737
Stanley Black	Decca LK4123
Debbie Reynolds	Vogue-Coral Q72274
Lena Horne	RCA RD27021
Sons Of The Pioneers	RCA RD27016
Zack Matalon	Nixa NPL18006

From the film "The Careless Years" comes the title song recorded winsomely and seductively, in the nicest way, by young **Sue Raney**, who at eighteen is quite a find, though the reverse of Cap. CL14757* is a more boisterous number, *What's The Good Word, Mr. Bluebird?* Then from "Beau James", the story of Jimmy Walker, sometime Mayor of New York City, comes the title song by **Dean Martin**, rather fuzzy on Cap. CL14758*, with a number that sounds like early Crosby, *Write To Me From Naples*, and a good souvenir from the same film with the cast that includes **Bob Hope** (London HAP2056). The exotic music of "Fire Down Below" is heard at length on *Bruno's LAT8194*.

Among the new faces—or rather, new voices—this month is young **Janice Harper** (H.M.V. POP376*), with a song that would suit Vera Lynn, *Bon Voyage*, and a new lyric to the old Italian tune that used to be known as *Love's Last Word Is Spoken, Chérie*. They seem to have inverted this sentiment, for it's now called *Tell Me That You Love Me Tonight*. Both are rather loud, but not displeasingly so.

In more sophisticated style comes another coupling from **Ella Fitzgerald** (H.M.V. POP380*), with an accompaniment that is much too coarse, in *Goody-Goody*, and a Latin arrangement of her first big success, *A-Tisket, A-Tasket*. Another artiste of the same race is **Lena Horne**, who on RCA RD27021 gives us nearly an hour of her performance in a New York club. Saucy, but no one could help liking it.

On the male side, the coloured artists this month include **Harry Belafonte** (H.M.V. 7EG8259) in four folk songs of rare charm and what seems like authenticity; they have the genuine ring. **Paul Robeson**, on the other hand, sings more numbers, but they are all drawing-room ballads, with perhaps two or three exceptions like *St. Louis Blues* and *Mood Indigo*, and though the superior vocal quality is at once apparent, the earthiness that is one of the chief attractions of Negro song is absent. (H.M.V. DLP1155). I suppose then, in view

of this, I should go into ecstasies over *Caribbean Calypso* on Parlo, CPMD13 with **Lords Beginner and Kitchener** amongst others, but their diction is such that it becomes very difficult indeed to follow what they are singing. This is earthiness laid on too thickly.

The white male singers include tenor **Malcolm Vaughan** declaiming in ringing tones *Oh, My Papa* and *What Is My Destiny?* on H.M.V. POP381*; another ringing tenor, **Harry Secombe**, in *While We Are Young and My World Is Your World*, is less successful in English from the diction viewpoint than in Italian opera and Neapolitan songs (Philips PB715). Then we have cowboy (?) **Ray Prince** in four straightforward "pops" (Philips BBE2137); hill-billy **Faron Young**, with a lot of celestial choir in *Moonlight Mountain* and *Love Has Finally Come My Way* (Cap. CL14762*), than which I have heard worse; **Tony Martin** (Mercury MPT7516) in *Dream Music*, which suffers from rather "dead" recording; the **Hi-Lo's**, very sibilant in *A Face In The Crowd* and surely unnecessarily dreary in *Autumn Rain* (Philips PB704); **Frank Sinatra** with a seductive Latin beat in *I Am Loved* and an oldie I remember on Columbia over six years ago, *Once In Love With Amy*; and a mammoth collection of twenty-five quite genuine cowboy songs and some non-vocal dance music associated with them, produced with taste and authenticity by the **Sons Of The Pioneers** on RCA RD27016.

But the most interesting solo male voice this month is that of globe-trotter **Zack Matalon** (Nixa NPL18006). He sings a wide range of popular songs, standards, and some French numbers with conviction, ease and charm. He looks very sad, on the sleeve of *Stranger In Town*; I hope the sales of this record do something to cheer him up!

Two American artists have multiple discs to their credit. First, **Mel Tormé**, who on Philips PB728 takes a flier at composing rock tunes, and comes up with *Ev'ry Which Way*, and a foggy but well-done modern version of a war-time hit, *Time Was*. He also appears in an American studio—the Philips was made in London—with **Marty Paich's** Dek-tette (London LTZN15076), in a glorious selection, with a beat that is really modern, of songs associated over the years with Fred Astaire. No copyism, just a graceful tribute from a fine artist to another.

Second, **Vic Damone**. He has an LP of *All-Time Song Hits* (though *Time On My Hands* has no sound of him!) on Mercury MPT7514; four more sophisticated standards of the 'thirties on Philips BBE12099; and a 78 with **Jo Stafford**, *Silence Is Golden* (very sibilant, again; surely this need not be?) and *Goodnight*, which is neither the Ted Lewis nor the Cavan O'Connor signature tune. It's a rather weary affair (Philips PB732).

The girls offer such rather unsuitably-cast things as **Eve Boswell** tearing along in *The Gypsy In My Soul* and a vulgar thing, *Stop Whistlin' Wolf* (Parlo, R4341*); and a much more appealing number, *Old Cape Cod*, sung in triplicate by **Patti Page** (surely this gimmick has had its day now?) on Mercury M1T160. **Anne Shelton** has a tailor-made song in *Souvenir d'Italie*, and a slightly less successful number in *Three Roads* (Philips PB726), and **Doris Day**, usually enjoyable, has a fine new set of good tunes (including *Autumn Leaves* sung as it should be, but seldom is) on Philips BBL7142. (She also has two new songs on PB722, but they rather miss the mark, being neither sweet and tuneful nor breezy and nonchalant.) Finally, in this caravanera of mixed talent, **Jane Powell** (H.M.V. CLP1131) pleads *Can't We Be Friends?* with youthful vigour and vibrant voice, and adds a lot of other well-known songs for good measure.

THE NATIONAL RADIO AND TELEVISION EXHIBITION

By P. WILSON, M.A.

A visitor from abroad seeing the radio sets, radiograms and record players at this year's Show might well think that at present the British are being dominated by Germany. Nearly all the designs seem to be modelled on those which are common on the continent and which Grundig has now made familiar over here.

One of my technical friends whom I questioned as to what he thought was the most significant feature of the exhibits promptly replied: "The cabinet work". And he was right, though I should add two other allied features: the styling of the panels and controls, and the fondness for multiple loudspeaker units.

I think the somewhat squat, horizontal cabinets are a distinct improvement on those that were in favour a few years ago, particularly when they incorporate a separate, partially insulated, chamber at the bottom which can be treated as a loudspeaker enclosure. Not every example took full advantage of this form of design, though, and one got the impression that the changeover to this form was a result of styling for appearance and not due to any appreciation of acoustic values. Similarly, I fear that in most cases the use of several speaker units was merely a concession to sales talk about 3-D and the like.

The large illuminated dial in black and gold with horizontal tuning scales was in evidence on almost every stand. And in most cases the controls were a combination of knobs (usually two, one for volume and one for tuning), piano keys (for wave-change, etc.), and edge projecting wheels (for tone control and the like). All very effective and all very German.

Another common design was that of the portable record player with a raised front, including grille for an elliptical loudspeaker, and a cut-out lid farther back enclosing the record-changer compartment. This also acts as a resonating chamber and gives a certain amount of added bass response. A successful design on these lines was to be found in the E.A.R. Microgram of a few years ago, and by now there must be a dozen, perhaps even a score, of firms who have followed this lead and present models of the same size (dictated in effect by the record-changer) and the same general character, the only substantial differences being in the covering, fabric or otherwise, of the case.

In the old days, of course, there was a similar concensus of ideas about portable gramophones: only rarely did a new conception like the famous and ubiquitous Decca make an appearance. There is, however, an important difference to be noticed between the two eras. A portable acoustic gramophone not only had a more limited range than its bigger brothers and sisters. There was also a large and uneven reaction between the small horn and the soundbox and this was transmitted through the needle to the groove, thus causing increased record wear. The modern electric pickup, on the other hand, is self-contained and the reaction between stylus and groove depends almost entirely on the design of pickup and carrying arm and practically not at all on what comes after. Of course, if the loudspeaker is in the same cabinet there will be a certain amount of acoustic feedback from the speaker through the air and/or the cabinet structure, but that is all.

By and large, therefore, a modern portable electric record player is far kinder to records than its predecessor, provided (and in this one respect there is no change) a little care is taken

to play with the turntable level. No sooner have I written that proviso than I recollect that Garrard are this year introducing a turntable and pickup which includes an E.V. Power-point Ceramic cartridge designed so as to play quite effectively even when the turntable is at an angle to the horizontal. The special value of this is, of course, for use on board ship.

On the television side, I found no new or specially interesting features. The lead given by H.M.V. last year in improving the quality of the sound channel has not been followed. Sound is still the Cinderella; and I did not see a single receiver where provision was made for tapping off the sound at a pre-output stage level to feed a High Fidelity system. This, by the way, is not a modification which I should advise an ordinary amateur to carry out for himself. Most television sets nowadays are A.C./D.C. affairs and the chassis is not at earth potential. One should not play about with it unless one knows exactly what one is doing—and has a service sheet handy.

Generally speaking, then, the Show was not particularly exciting this year. But I did note one or two individual things of special interest.

Thus, to me, the outstanding feature was the G.E.C. demonstration of commercial stereophonic tapes (E.M.I. and American), using two Periphonic loudspeaker systems. In my report of the Audio Fair last May I commented on the superlative bass quality which the Periphonic system produces. This new experience more than confirms my previous judgment: it also conclusively demonstrates the correctness of the argument of the E.M.I. engineers that stereophony should be carried right down to the bass register, and not cease at about 500 c/s, as some continental experts have contended. Evidently, too, a reduction of harmonic and intermodulation distortion in the bass register is highly important. That is the wonderful achievement of the Periphonic system, which uses two loudspeaker units, one inside the other and operating in anti-phase. Each single unit operating separately at 5 watts output will produce as much as 10 or 12 per cent harmonic distortion below 100 c/s. But when the two

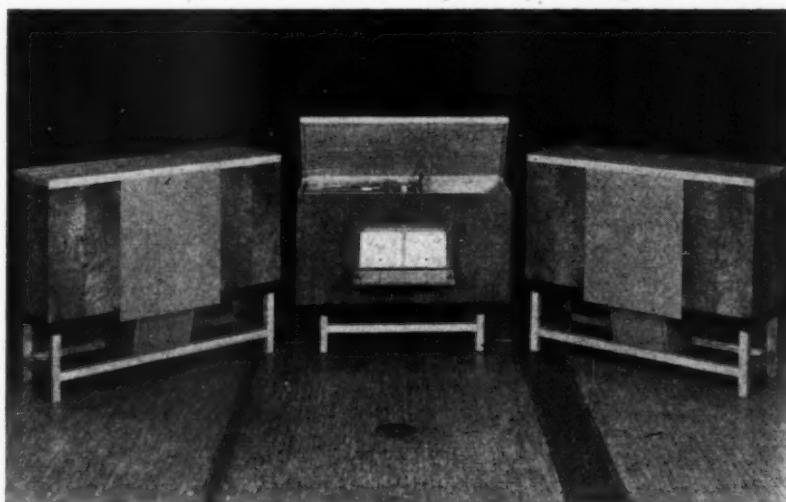
units are closely coupled in anti-phase the *total* harmonic distortion can be reduced to less than 4 per cent (even with 10 watts output) at 40 c/s.

The result of the coupling is a smooth, singing quality which is as clear as a bell and without hangover, so that the bass is never overpowering. The use of two Periphonic systems in stereophonic arrangement enhances this quality to quite a remarkable degree. I have never heard such bass quality in reproduction before. I shall long remember the record of the Bach *Magnificat in A* and that of the Overture to the *Mikado*, with its deep drum notes in the opening bars: Soh, ray—Pom, Pom, Pom.

Of course, all this quality costs money. Apart from the four "Presence Units" used for the treble (and, I suspect, differentially fed), each of the two loudspeakers in cabinets cost about £85 and the total cost for loudspeakers alone was therefore of the order of £200. That of the whole equipment worked out at over £400, which is rather a lot for poor hard-working Britshers. And this, be it emphasised, was the price not of more noise but of the achievement of greater realism in quality at comparatively moderate volume. This is true pioneering work. Reduction of cost is a stage that may (or may not) come later.

The other exhibits in the Show that particularly attracted my attention had this opposite kind of appeal and represented the latter type of development: good quality at comparatively low cost. Thus, there was the R.C.A. build-up of a tape amplifier and additional loudspeaker to match their portable Vice-President record player. In this way, it is claimed, a home stereophonic reproducer can be had, together with an ordinary disc record player, for under £120. Unfortunately, I was unable to judge of the effectiveness in the demonstration I heard, for the equipment was operated in too small a demonstration room and, as I thought, at too large a volume.

Again, I take my hat off to the designer of the new Pye 10-watt amplifier which is to be known as the Mozart and is to be sold at 22 gns. It is a compact little affair, measuring only 10½ in. long by 3½ in. high by 5 in. deep and weighs only 9 lbs. in its metal cabinet. It can therefore be housed in the smallest of bookcases. It has only three valves, plus a metal rectifier, and yet has a sensitivity of 10 m.v. for 10 watts output. It has bass and treble controls, treble filter, selector switch for record equalisation, inputs for tape, radio and pickup and a separate output for tape recording. And it has a most



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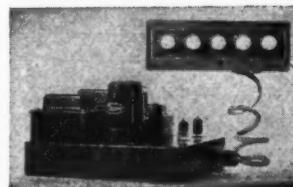
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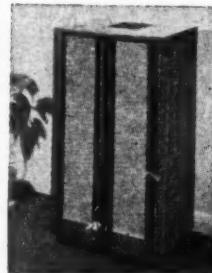
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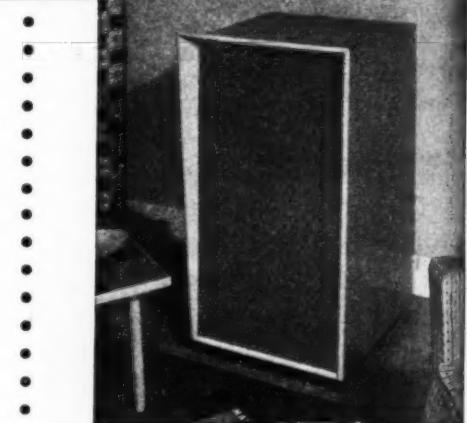


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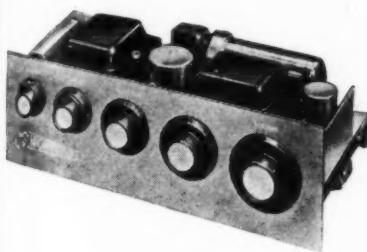
Musicraft's FEH Enclosure gives an enthralling sensation of "presence" and the crisp, clean reproduction the critical listener demands.

"Audiomaster" will be on demonstration at the Northern Audio Fair, Harrogate, October 25th-27th, when a representative of Musicraft Audio Products Ltd., will be in attendance with a view to appointing agents in the North and Midlands.

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October, 1957



Pye Mozart HF10 amplifier

attractive pickup compensator for quick matching of different kinds of pickup. The frequency response is stated to be from 3 c/s to 70 kc/s, plus or minus 3 db with a distortion of only 0.3 per cent at 9 watts. The wiring is by printed circuit, but the most interesting feature about the amplifier, technically, is the cunning output stage, which uses a single EL34 valve with distributed load via the cathode. This is fed from a winding on the output transformer, which is also used as the loudspeaker winding. In this way, of course, the voltage on the screen grid of the EL34 is kept rock steady—an important consideration which is often overlooked. I predict a successful future for this amplifier.



E.A.R. Trio-Console Speaker

though its musical capabilities are likely to be somewhat restricted.

Two other exhibits I would pick out for special mention. The first was the wide range of cabinets and loudspeaker units on the W/B

stand, all of good quality and all at prices so low as to be attractive to everyone. No, I am wrong. There was one loudspeaker unit and enclosure being demonstrated which had been built as an experiment and regardless of cost and a very remarkable combination it was. My favourites, however, are the two new cabinets, of modern style, one for loudspeaker and the other for amplifier system. I hope shortly to describe a design using one of the latter with Collaro Tape Transcriber in a fashion similar to the larger Ferrograph cum Precord design I published a couple of months ago.

The last item I must mention is the Comparator, which I saw in the Mullard demonstration room. This is a design by the Mullard engineers to enable dealers to switch over to different inputs, different amplifiers and different loudspeakers merely by pressing the appropriate buttons on a panel. This system is obviously ingenious and highly convenient. But I suggest that it could also be very confusing to the listener unless intelligently operated. I still think that demonstrators of sound reproducing equipment have much to learn. My firm advice in this respect is that they should study the technique developed by Peter Walker of Acoustical Mfg. Co. and by Hugh Brittain of G.E.C.



E.A.R. Triple-Four amplifier

Another little amplifier that attracted my notice, though it is more conventional and less ambitious in some ways, was the 6-watt, four-stage, push-pull, Triple Four which is sold by E.A.R. at the remarkably modest price of 11 gns. This has an input sensitivity of 100 mv and is thus suitable for the better types of crystal pickups; but a special model is available at 14 gns. for inputs as low as 10 mv. I heard it feeding a Trio Console Speaker, which seemed to me to be a remarkably good little speaker considering its price, which is only 15 gns.; yet it incorporates a 12-inch, 10,000 gauss unit in a small bass reflex cabinet, together with two 4-inch treble units. I will wager that a combination of the Triple Four with a Trio Console and a V.H.F. Tuner (total cost 41 gns.) with a playing desk incorporating a Transcription turntable will give a radiogram of which no one need be ashamed.

In the Tape Recorder field the central attraction was still the wonderful E.M.I. Professional models, which of course are in a class by themselves. The Ferrograph, Simon and Spectro-Reflectograph were conspicuous by their absence this year. E.A.P., however, were showing a new range, based on the Collaro Transcriber, which I am quite confident will represent an advance on last year's models. So also will the O-Sound models marketed by the Mail Order Supply Company of Tottenham Court Road. Here I was particularly intrigued by the prototype of a tiny tape recorder to sell at 24 gns., which seemed to me to have considerable possibilities as a dictating machine, even

TECHNICAL REPORTS

By P. WILSON, M.A.

Goldring "600" Pickup and T.R.1 Arm.

Price 8 gns. (plus P.T. £3 5s. 6d.) each for Pickup—cartridge and Arm. Goldring Mfg. Co. Ltd., Leytonstone, London.

Cartridge

I think I was the first technical writer in the world to acclaim the "500" cartridge as being in the van of variable reluctance pickups. That was three years ago, and later experience did not cause me to modify my verdict, notwithstanding the keener competition from later designs.

I was aware, as I stated, of one or two features which I had to regard as shortcomings, but these were of a minor character. One—a tendency on some turntables for a slight hum induction—was removed almost at once by a mu-metal screen. Another—a small peak in the response on LPs between 16 kc/s and 17 kc/s—proved intractable so long as a sapphire stylus was used and the substitution of a diamond at first made matters worse because of the difficulties of mounting the diamond without adding too much mass in the mounting. (Some diamond stylus that I have seen were supplied—but not by Goldring—mounted in a massive brass sheath!)

One way of dealing with such peaks (which must be present in any design) is to apply critical damping. But this is a tricky business which might well lead to non-linearity in the stylus displacement and thence to intermodulation distortion. But if the peak could be pushed up to over 20 kc/s it would become entirely inoffensive within the audibility and recording limits, so far as the frequency response and distortion characteristics are concerned.

That is what the new "600" cartridge has done. A way has been found of mounting a diamond stylus on a tiny cantilever assembly so as to reduce the effective mass at the stylus tip by nearly 50 per cent (not 100 per cent as I have seen stated!), and this has shifted the H.F. resonance to between 22 kc/s and 23 kc/s.

The difference is noticeable in actual reproduction even to me, who cannot in these days hear pure tones above 15 kc/s. (I can hear 13 kc/s and just hear 15 kc/s, but am deaf to 14 kc/s!) As I remarked last May, I could pick out the prototype 600 cartridge every time in a blind man's buff sort of comparison with 500's and other well-known types.

I have now tested one of the first cartridges off the production line and have noted the same characteristics: long range, exceptional smoothness and low distortion. Thanks to the new Decca Microgroove Constant Frequency Record that has just been issued (LXT5346) we have been able to make measurements of the response up to 18 kc/s. Such measurements are not always reliable; I strongly object, for example, to measurements taken either on open circuit or with dummy loads which is a standard practice with some people. To get any trustworthy indication of performance one should use actual playing conditions with a good amplifier and control unit. Even the equalisation characteristics of the latter may materially affect the verdict.

For our measurements on this occasion we used a Quad II amplifier and control unit whose characteristics we know accurately. The results were as follows (taking the response at 1 kc/s as zero level):

From 18 kc/s down to 1 kc/s: dead flat.
From 1 kc/s to 100 c/s: rising to +1½ db.
From 100 c/s to 50 c/s: falling to -2 db.
From 50 c/s to 30 c/s: falling to -6 db.



This is as near perfection as makes no matter. The actual output in millivolts depends of course on recording level. Comparatively, we found the output from the 600 cartridge to be adequate for all ordinary records when used with an amplifier of 20 mv sensitivity at 50,000 ohms impedance.

There remains one other thing to be noted. This cartridge is an instrument of virtually laboratory precision and sensitiveness and should be so treated. It will play at stylus pressures (playing weights) of 5 grms or less and will stand up to all reasonable conditions of use. But the tiny cantilever is free and undamped at the stylus end and should therefore not be subjected to rough treatment. Intermodulation distortion would inevitably ensue if it were permanently displaced from its central position between the two tiny pole pieces. A guard is incorporated to protect it from most hazards; but no precautions can protect such a delicate scientific instrument from carelessness and abuse.

So do be careful, particularly in regard to side pressure, and you will have an instrument which will be a joy and a delight for many a long day. For, remember, the life of a good diamond stylus, carefully used, in some 50 times that of a sapphire and in optimum conditions (e.g. provided that meticulous care is taken to keep records free from dust) may be as much as 3,000 hours playing time. Without such care 1,000 hours is as much as one should expect.

Carrying Arm

The T.R.I. is a transcription arm of novel design. Its bearings, vertical and horizontal, are both solidly constructed on ball races and are beautifully free. They are totally enclosed as a protection against dust.

The height of the arm at the vertical bearing is adjustable from $\frac{1}{2}$ in. to 2 in. above motor-board. Provision is also made for precision levelling.

The overall length of arm is 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. and the effective length from centre of pedestal spindle to stylus point is 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. The arm is permanently cranked to give an offset angle of 19 $\frac{1}{2}$ degrees, which corresponds to a linear offset of 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. The makers recommend an overhang of $\frac{1}{8}$ in., giving a base line from middle of turntable spindle to centre of the 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. diameter pedestal of 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. This corresponds accurately to the conditions for a 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch offset worked out in the table on p. 99 of my Gramophone Handbook.

An unusual system of weight adjustment is incorporated to enable the stylus pressure to be varied (without springs) from 4 to 10 grms. for any make of turnover cartridge. The counterbalance weight is in front of the vertical bearing, and not behind as is usually the case. Provided the vertical bearing is built so as to withstand the added strain, which it is in this case, this system has distinct mechanical advantages. In particular it facilitates the dynamic levelling process so as to neutralise all side pressure between stylus and groove.

The arm is thus eminently suited for use with the 600 cartridge.

On the whole, then, I have no doubt that this combination will rapidly find its place throughout the world as maintaining and enhancing the reputation which the 500 cartridge so worthily achieved.

Pilot HFAII Amplifier/Control Unit. Price 30 gns. Pilot Radio Ltd., Park Royal Road, London, N.W.10.

Specification (maker's figures)

Power Output: 10 watts.

Hum level: 80 db below full output.

Sensitivity for full output:

Mag. pickup: 3-5 mV.

Crystal pickup: 160 mV.
Radio, Tape, Auxiliary: 120 mV.
Input impedances:
Mag. pickup: 6,800-100,000 ohms.
Crystal pickup: 1 megohm.
Radio, Tape, Auxiliary: 47,000 ohms.
Harmonic Distortion: 0.1% for 8 watts at 1 kc/s.

Negative Feedback: 21 db.
Tape Output: 1 megohm impedance.
Frequency Response: 20 c/s-20,000 c/s, plus or minus 1 db.

Tone Controls (zero at 800 c/s):

Bass: \pm 18 db at 20 c/s.

\pm 15 db at 40 c/s.

Treble: \pm 18 db at 20 kc/s.

\pm 15 db at 12 kc/s.

Controls: Volume, Loudness (Fletcher/Munson compensation), Treble, Bass, Scratch Filter, Rumble Filter, Selector.

Selector Switch: L.P., A.E.S., R.I.A.A., 78, Radio, Auxiliary, Tape.

Valve Line-up:

ECC83—pre-amp.; ECC83—tone amp.; ECC83—phase inverter; EL84 (2)—power amp.; E281—rectifier.

Case: In brushed brass, 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide by 8 in. deep (plus knobs) by 5 in. high.

This amplifier follows American rather than British practice in design. Apart from the loudness compensation control, which is standard in America but is regarded with disfavour by many engineers over here, the types of tone control circuits have an American look about them. Moreover, the phase inverter circuit is of the paraphase type which, though originally invented by Carpenter in Britain, became much more popular across the water than it has done here. Again the use of double triodes in the early stages and not pentodes is typical of trans-Atlantic practice.

With these points in mind, one can say that the circuit arrangements are conventional and straightforward.

The construction, on the other hand, follows the British practice of point to point wiring rather than the grouped board system. It is quite neat and tidy and accessible.

Our tests of the performance showed a complete correlation between aural judgment and measurement. In presenting the story, therefore, it is sufficient just to give the various figures that our series of measurements produced. It should, however, be noted that except for the measurements of frequency response from a magnetic pickup input, the signal input (from an "Advance" audio oscillator) was fed into the second valve so as to avoid the equalisation circuits. The loudness control was set at maximum in all cases.

Here, then, are the results:

Power output v. frequency
Cycles/sec. ... 20 50 100 1,000 20k
Power (watts) ... 4 8 9 9 8
(These are the figures at which grid current appeared.)

Frequency response from audio-oscillator

As in Specification.

Frequency response from magnetic pickup (corrected for R.I.A.A. equalisation)

c/s ... 20 30 50 150 1,000 17k

db ... -5 -3 -2 -1 0 -6

For a level response judicious use of tone controls is thus required, e.g. a +2 bass setting for level bass response and a higher figure for treble response. We found it impossible, however, to make the desired adjustments so as to improve the

Amplifier Stability

With resistance load of 15 ohms, amplifier was unstable with a capacity across load of 0.1 mfd and on the verge of instability with a capacity of

0.05 mfd. With a pure reactive load of 0.01 mfd instability was marked.

With ordinary single speaker conditions of working these figures present no difficulty. But they might well lead to trouble with multiple cross-over systems. The amplifier would not be suitable for electrostatic speaker operation.

Microgroove Frequency Test Record LX15346

The issue by Decca of a new Frequency Record going up to 18 kc/s is an event of some technical importance. As will be seen, I promptly made use of it to give me the "low-down" on the Goldring "600" cartridge. Hitherto I have had to be content with measurements up to 15 kc/s on LXT2695 which has now been withdrawn.

The new record has been recorded to the B.S. microgroove curve except that frequencies above 10 kc/s are 6 db below standard. The zero level is at 1,000 c/s and is equal to 1.2 cm/sec.

On one side the range proceeds by steps from 30 c/s to 18 kc/s. The other side has a gliding tone covering the same range and levels, but there are breaks every 1,000 c/s from 17 kc/s to 1 kc/s and then at 500, 250, 125 and 60 c/s.

Reflectograph RR 102: Correction

In my report last month I failed to note that the instrument has two balanced internal speakers. The way this has been done is a useful contribution to the good quality I noted.

PYE-NIXA DELETIONS

It is announced that all records originating from the American "Concert Hall" company have been deleted and can no longer be supplied (though, of course, they may still be available from dealers' stocks). The following discs are involved:

CLP1068—ARRIAGA : String Quartets

Guiliet Qu.

CLP1120—MOZART : Piano Concerti, K.238 & K.246

A. Balsam, Winterthur—Gödr.

CLP1125—TCHAIKOVSKY : Piano Concerto No. 2, G major

N. Mewton-Wood, Winterthur—Gödr.

CLP1126—TCHAIKOVSKY : Piano Concerto 3 ; Concerto Fantasia

N. Mewton-Wood, Winterthur—Gödr.

CLP1133—CHOPIN : Studies, Op. 25 : Herald Variations

R. Goldsack, piano

CLP1139—TCHAIKOVSKY : Symphony No. 3, "Polish"

Vienna State Opera Orch.—Swoboda

CLP1142—BRUCKNER : Symphony, D minor

Symphony Orch.—Gödr.

CLP1152—SCHUBERT : String Quartet, "Death and the Maiden"

Hungarian Quartet

CLP1153—CHOPIN : Piano Concerto No. 1, E minor

N. Mewton-Wood, Netherlands Phil.—Gödr.

CLP1154—ELGAR : Enigma Variations ; Serenade for Strings

Sym. Orchestra—Gödr.

CLP1167—BLISS : Piano Concerto

N. Mewton-Wood, Utrecht—Gödr.

CLP1199—BEETHOVEN : Bagatelles, collection

G. Johansson

CLP1201 } BEETHOVEN : String Quartets, etc.

Pascal Quartet, A. Balsam, etc.

CLP1311—HUMMEL : Piano Concerto, A minor

A. Balsam, Winterthur—Ackermann

NCL16008—MASSENET : Le Cid, Ballet Suite

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV : Tsar Saltan, Suite

Netherlands—Spruit

In addition, various light-music discs of French origin will cease to be available when stocks are exhausted. The numbers are:

L.P.Y : 105, 120, 121, 122, 123, 126, 127, 128, 129,

160, 161, 162

45EP : 351

N.P.T : 19005

As some small recompense for the above deletions, it is also announced that Hols' *Planete* (NLP903) is now back in production, after being unobtainable for some time.

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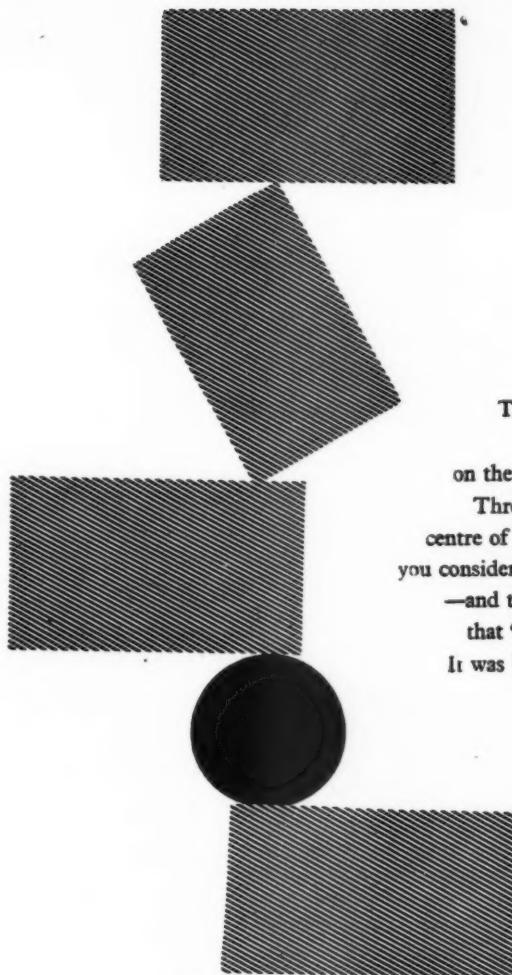
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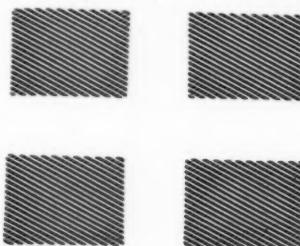
*precision
and
craftsmanship*

Take a look at your wristwatch. The odds
are a hundred to one that in small lettering
on the dial you will find the words "Swiss Made".

Throughout the world Switzerland is recognised as the
centre of craftsmanship in precision mechanisms. When
you consider the service your watch gives you day after day
—and the price you paid for it—you may well conclude
that "Swiss Made" also means sheer value for money.
It was by no accident that Goldring turned to Switzerland
for a transcription gramophone motor. Modern
record reproduction calls for a craftsman-
made mechanism of more than
average precision and reliability. And
modern strains on purses call for nothing
short of real value for money.



GOLDRING-LENCO
GRAMOPHONE TRANSCRIPTION MOTORS



Goldring Manufacturing Co. (Great Britain) Ltd.
486 High Road, Leytonstone, London, E.11
(Leytonstone 8343)



RCA EQUIPMENT

The RCA New Orthophonic High Fidelity Equipment has become established in knowledgeable circles as an outstanding example of a range of equipment attractive both in performance and appearance. It has an excellent combination of amplifier, control unit, F.M. tuner, pickup, console speaker and Lowboy cabinet. The Amplifier and Control Unit are one of the finest available combinations. The control unit is finished with a cream front panel, brown escutcheon and cream/gold knobs. The main amplifier is of extremely robust construction.



Price £41 complete. The F.M. Tuner (illustrated) which has a similar finish to the Control Unit, has a tuning range from 87.5 to 108 Mc/s. Price £33.11.4.

The Pickup is available in a variety of types. Price, with dual sapphire Styli, £14.11.10.

Also available with diamond Styli. The three-speaker system comprises two 2½" and one 15" moving-coil speakers. Frequency response is from 29 c/s to 20 K/cs. Price £56.11.0. The Lowboy cabinet costs £17.10.0.

Additionally, RCA offer two attractive record reproducers giving quality reproduction at lower cost. The first of these is the "President". This model combines contemporary styling with superb reproduction. Three speakers are fitted giving an omni-directional sound source. Separate treble and bass controls are provided and a compensated volume control. A four-speed automatic changer is fitted with a turnover crystal pickup. The amplifier has a normal output of 10 watts and peak power of 15 watts. Price, inc. Tax, 68 Gns.

The "Vice President" has similar controls to the above and a triple speaker system. Power output is 10 watts. Price 43 Gns. + £1.15.0 for optional set of legs.

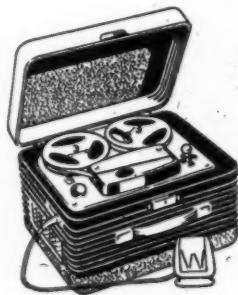
Quality Mart

8 DARTMOUTH PARK AVENUE,
LONDON, N.W.5. GULLIVER 1131

Royal Pleasure

Bluff King Hal and Fidelity of any sort seems scarcely compatible. However, he was most constant in his affection for music though if it were inharmonious his wrath would be right royal. To-day High Fidelity equipment and records supplied by Quality Mart increase domestic harmony beyond any that King Hal ever knew, in fact giving music fit for a King.

TAPE RECORDERS



The Collaro Mk. III transcriptor is now available with pre-amplifier as exhibited at the Radio Show. Price complete is £43. The Walter 303 recorder (illustrated) is priced at only 39 Gns. but is worth considering on its merits. Simple controls, 3 watts output, complete with microphone and tape.

We have an unrivalled variety of tape recorders of all prices, sizes and types. These are available for demonstration at any time, and a full range of tape accessories is always in stock.

ACCESSORIES

Record cases from 18/4d. post paid.
Bib Tape Splicer 19/-d. post paid.
Wearite De-Fluxer 50/-d. post paid

NEW!
Details have just been released of the New Rogers Junior Control Unit Mk. II. Incorporating an improved circuit it gives vastly better control facilities. For further details see the makers' advertisements or write to us.

The Price complete with Junior Amplifier £28.

Our Showroom is open for demonstrations daily 9.30-6.
Friday 1.30-9. Closed Monday.
Only 20 minutes from Charing Cross by
Northern Underground or Bus 27, 134,
137 to Tufnell Park Station.

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Part of the reconstructed "H.M.V." Showrooms in Oxford Street.

Selling Records

Competition in the retail side of the Gramophone Record Industry is higher today than it has ever been before. Never before have there been so many dealers and never before have there been so many customers. Several innovations have been introduced in an effort to provide a better service for the customer, notable amongst these has been "self-service". In the main this has been restricted to the sale of popular records, but now, in the showrooms of "His Master's Voice" in Oxford Street, it has been extended to cover the basic repertoire in the field of classical recordings.

The new department is divided into three main sections: (1) Opera, Lieder and Choral Music; (2) Symphonies and Orchestral Music; (3) Concertos, Instrumental and Chamber Music. Within each section are clearly labelled "browser boxes", one instance containing various versions of all the nine Beethoven Symphonies which are currently in stock. In addition to the records there is a card which lists all the available versions of the nine symphonies, the information being taken from THE GRAMOPHONE CLASSICAL LP CATALOGUE, so that, apart from the recording held in stock, the customer can see at a glance what else is available. The department is staffed by a number of expert assistants, so that advice can be given in the choice of works as well as individual recordings. The introduction of this new department completes the programme of modernisation which was begun in 1955 and there is little doubt that these showrooms are amongst the most advanced to be found anywhere.

The name of Hamptons, for many years prominent in the furnishing world, has recently become more closely associated with the gramophone record business. Record departments have been opened in London, in Whitcombe Street and Kensington High Street, the latter being carried out in the latest contemporary style with many innovations which will be of benefit to customers. For instance the Popular "Top Twenty" can all be listened to through a bank of earphones whilst an adjacent self-service counter provides for the ready sale of the discs. In addition there are four well appointed listening rooms and seven

listening booths controlled from behind the counter.

However, apart from modernisation within the shop, there is quite a lot which can be done outside in an effort to attract customers. The Record Centre at Newcastle-upon-Tyne have experimented most successfully in the field of Record Recitals, using the Connaught Hall and filling it to capacity on seven occasions during the past winter. For the latter five recitals a small charge was made in an effort to limit the number of tickets to the capacity of the hall, the proceeds being donated to charity. The next Winter Season has already begun and, apart from the continuation of the successful record recitals, the City Hall, with a seating capacity of 2,500, has been booked for November 19th, when the Record Centre will introduce the London Mozart Players under their conductor, Harry Blech.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor does not necessarily agree with any views expressed in letters printed. Address: The Editor, THE GRAMOPHONE, The Glade, Green Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex.

Baroque Trumpet Music

I wonder if you would be kind enough to allow me to trespass on your valuable space in order to clear up a point which arises from D.S.'s review of the *Baroque Trumpet Music* disc, Oiseau Lyre OL50137, printed in the July issue of THE GRAMOPHONE? This disc was so sympathetically reviewed that it seems more than a little churlish to dispute a point with the reviewer, but I know that he will agree that musicological crucifixes must be clarified wherever possible.

This particular crux lies in the use of the word *Serenade* for the fifth movement of the *Suite in D*, by Jeremiah Clarke, of *Trumpet Voluntary* fame. D.S. implies that an error was perhaps made in transcribing this term, which must have originally read *Sarabrand*, or *Celabrand*, or one of the other curious corruptions of *Sarabande*. However, I can assure him that this is not the case; the word is *Serenade*, and was thus written by Jerry Clarke, and not merely by me. Indeed, it can even be seen in print on page 12 of the

famous *Choice Collection of Ayres for the Harpsichord*, published in 1700, where this very piece will be found only one folio distant from the celebrated *Trumpet Voluntary* itself. And according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* the expression had already been in use in these islands for half a century at least; the *Dictionary* quotes examples going back to 1649, many with musical connotations. One specially apt quotation dates from a few years after the publication of the *Choice Collection*, but still two years before Clarke's own untimely end: "We caus'd 3 Serenading Tunes to be plai'd . . ."—this from as far north as Edinburgh, in 1705, and with emphasis on the playing, rather than the singing, of such "Serenading Tunes".

I do not have to remind as good a musicologist as D.S. that the Italian form *Serenata* was already well established by the mid-seventeenth century, that Molière, Lully and M. A. Charpentier were all familiar with the French form of the word, that Biber used it for an instrumental piece, and that Tunder was performing *Abendmusik* in Lübeck as early as the 1640s. As for the trumpet being too loud an instrument for a serenade, we need only remember that the famous "Mr. Showers" gained his greatest celebrity for the gentleness, rather than the loudness, of his trumpet playing. In any case, the object in serenading was probably to wake the lady up, rather than send her to sleep, which would surely defeat the end of any lover. And as for loudness, Jerry Clarke's tune is quietness itself compared with the clatter of Lully's music *Pour le couche du Roy*!

In conclusion, may I thank D.S. for his kind words about our disc, and my sleeve-notes, and assure him that I have written this not to cavil, but to clarify.

Cambridge.

CHARLES CUDWORTH.

D.S. writes: That will teach me to keep my volume-control at a reasonable level!

Record Sleeves

The standard of LP covers has been steadily improving throughout the past few years, and we have had some artistically excellent ones. (H.M.V.'s "Emperor" concerto played by Solomon and Columbia's "Irresistible Strauss" to mention but two.)

However, one company appears to be trying to sell records by appealing to the more primitive instincts in their customers. I cite the majority of LP covers illustrated in the Philips advertisement in your August issue, particularly the young lady in the field to represent the "Pastoral" aspects of Beethoven's sixth symphony. Whilst this type of advertising should suit some of the records reviewed in the second half of your journal, I fear it would not meet with Mr. Beethoven's approval. Similarly, when composing the "Unfinished", I doubt if Mr. Schubert was inspired by another young lady who appears to be sleep-walking along the shore in a very flimsy nightgown.

Whilst wishing for attractive covers for my LPs (and I would be the first to admit that these ladies certainly meet that description), I feel something a little more suitable could have been chosen.

Twickenham, Mx. S. STUART HARTLEY.

The Prodigal Son

In reviewing Vox PL9310, a recording of Prokofiev's "The Prodigal Son", your reviewer R.F. states that this ballet, so far as he knows, has not been seen here since the pre-war performances by the de Basil company, which he refers to as the Massine company. (In fact, of course, at the time of the 1939 revival of this ballet Massine was with the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo.)

His supposition is incorrect. The ballet was revived in the Lichine choreography by the original Ballet Russe at Covent Garden in 1947,

when it helped to introduce Jeanmaire to London. In the original choreography of Balanchine it was one of the great successes of the New York City Ballet's London seasons of 1950 and 1952.

Edgware, Mx.

RICHARD SHEAD.

"The Gramophone" Exchange & Mart

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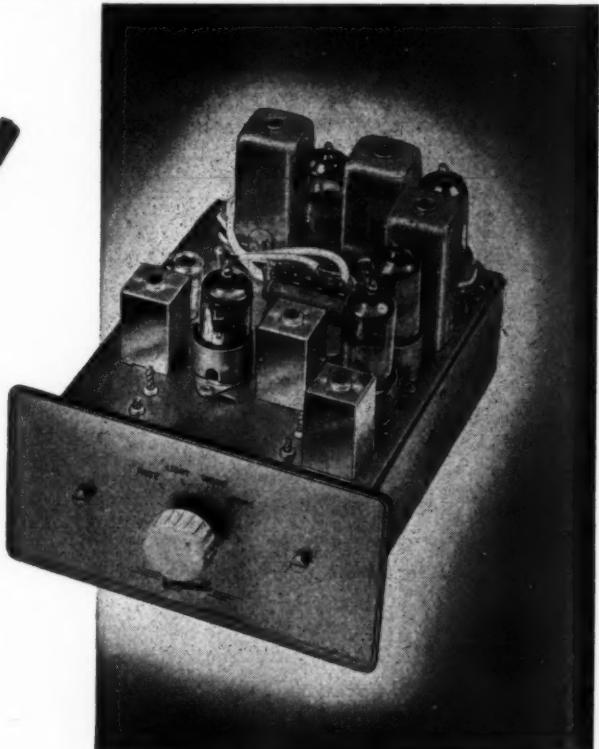
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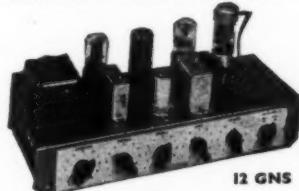
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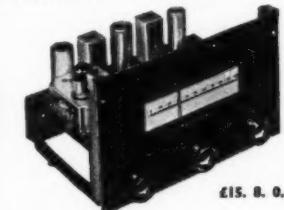
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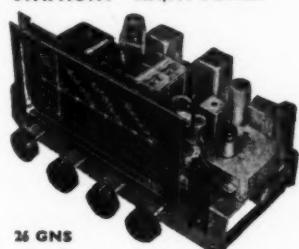
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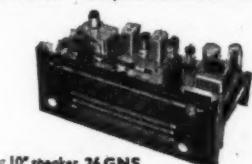
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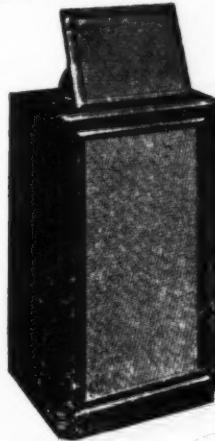
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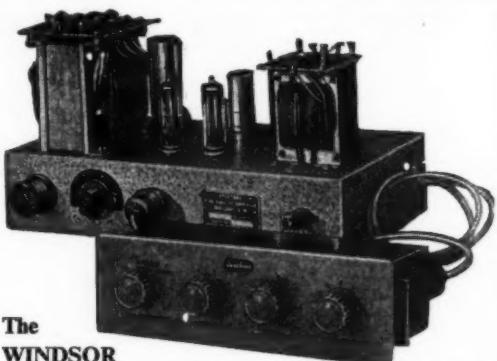
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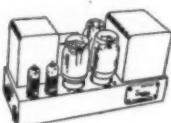
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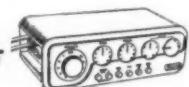
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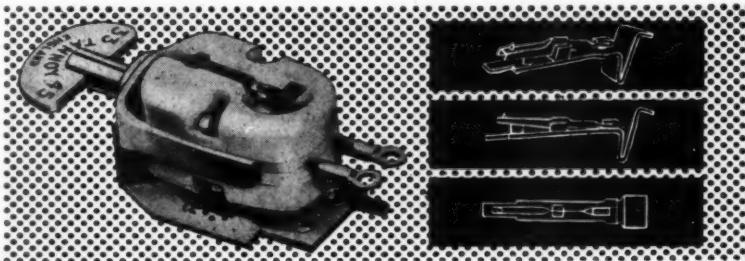
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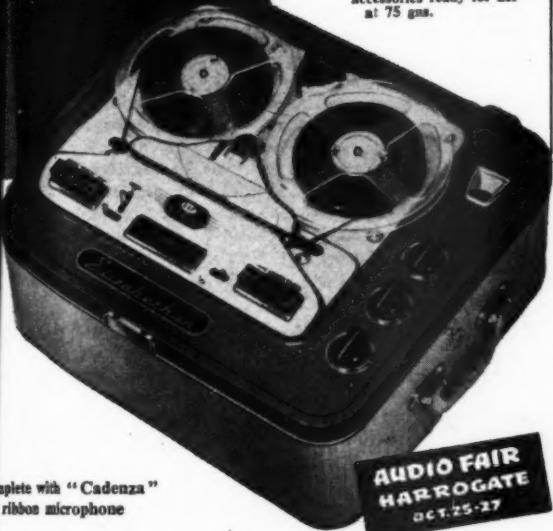
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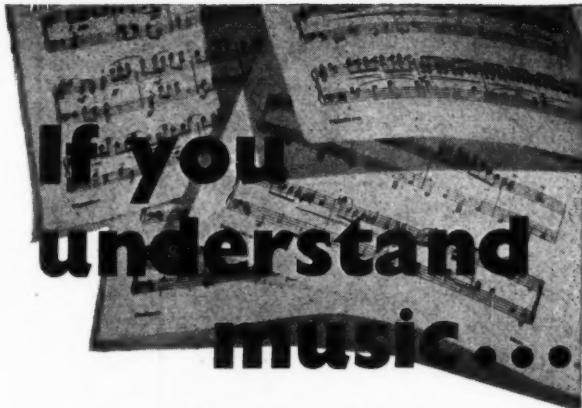
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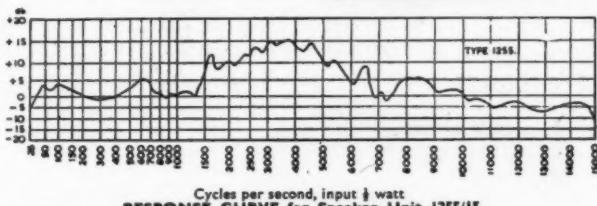
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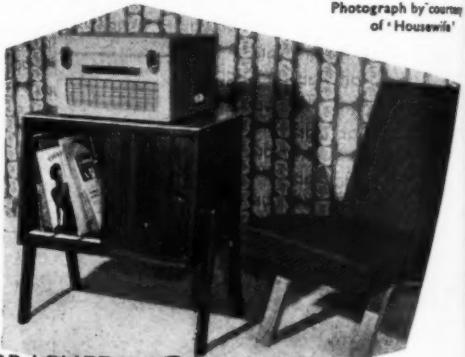
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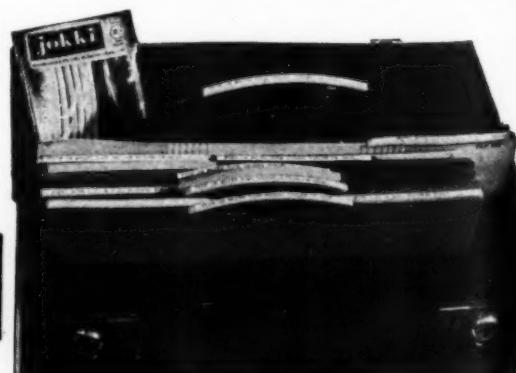
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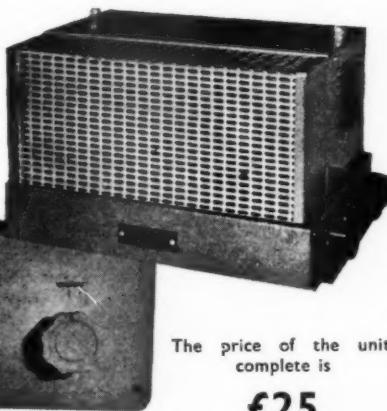
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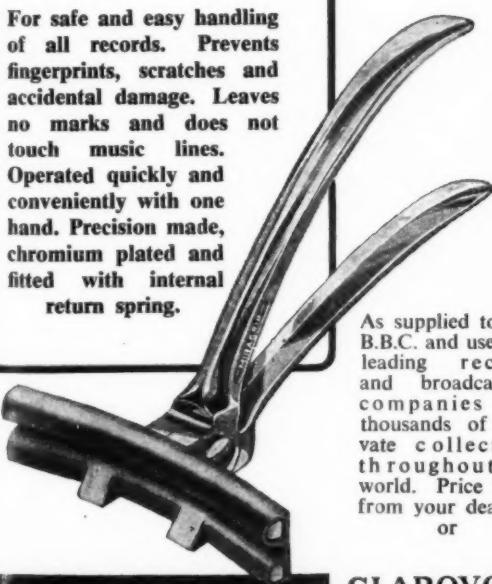
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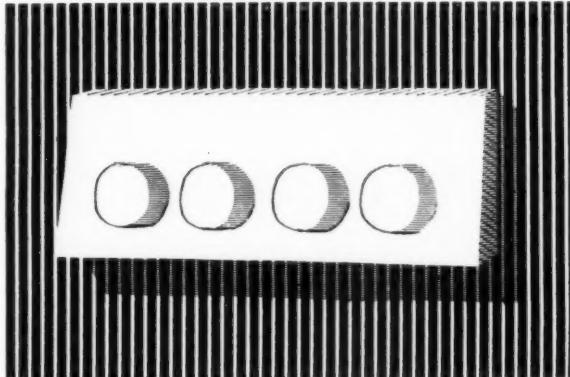
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